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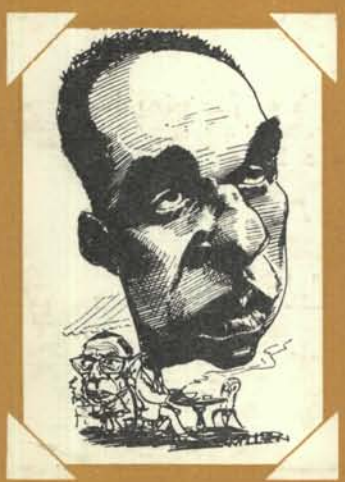

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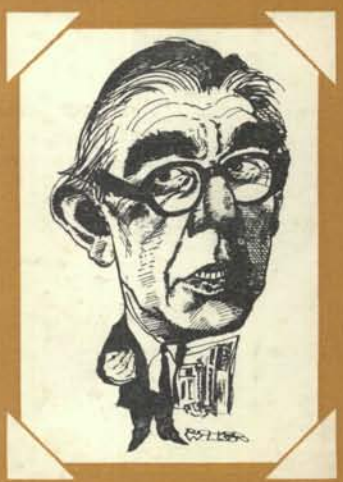

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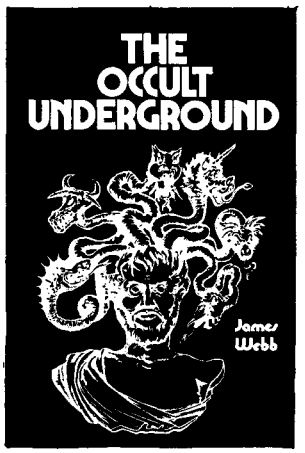

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R. Prawer Jhabvala

Picnic with Moonlight & Mangoes

UNFORTUNATELY the town in which Sri Prakash lived was a small one so that everyone knew what had happened to him. At first he did not go out at all, on account of feeling so ashamed; but, as the weeks dragged on, sitting at home became very dreary. He also began to realise that, with thinking and solitude, he was probably exaggerating the effect of his misfortune on other people. Misfortune could befall anyone, any time; there was really no need to be ashamed. So one morning when his home seemed particularly depressing he made up his mind to pay a visit to the coffee house. He left while his wife was having her bath—he told her he was going, he shouted it through the bathroom door, and if she did not hear above the running water that was obviously not his fault.

So when he came home and she asked him where he had been, he could say "I *told* you" with a perfectly good conscience. He was glad of that because he could see she had been worried about him. While she served him his food, he did his best to reassure her. He told her how pleased they had all been to see him in the coffee house. Even the waiter had been pleased and had brought his usual order without having to be told. His wife said nothing but went on patiently serving him. Then he began somewhat to exaggerate the heartiness of the welcome he had received. He said things which, though not strictly true, had a good effect—not so much on her (she continued silently to serve him) as on himself. By the time he had finished eating and talking, he was perfectly reassured as to what had happened that morning. The little cloud of unease with which he had come home was dispelled. He realised now that no one had looked at him queerly, and that there had been no undertones in their "Just see who is here." It was only his over-sensitive nature that had made it seem like that.

He had always had a very sensitive nature—a poet's temperament. He was proud of it, but there was no denying that it had been the cause of many troubles to him—including the present one. The facts of the case were these: Sri Prakash, a gazetted government officer, had been suspended from his post in the State Ministry of Telecommunication while an inquiry was instituted regarding certain accusations against him. These were based on the words of a man who was a drunkard, a liar, and a convicted perjurer. His name was Goel and he was the father of a Miss Nimmi. Miss Nimmi had come to Sri Prakash to enquire about a possible vacancy as typist in his office. Sri Prakash had sincerely tried to help the girl, calling her for interviews several times, and the result of his good intentions had been that she had complained of his misbehaviour towards her. The father, after visiting Sri Prakash both in his office and at home and finding him not the man to yield to blackmail and extortion, had carried the complaint to Sri Prakash's superiors in the department. From there on events had taken their course. Naturally it was all extremely unpleasant for Sri Prakash—a family man, a husband and father of three respectably married daughters—but, as he was always telling his wife, he had no doubts that in the end truth and justice would prevail.

She never made any comment when he said that. She was by nature a silent woman, silent and virtuous. How virtuous! She was the ideal of all a mother and wife should be. He thanked God that he had it in him to appreciate her character. He worshipped her. He often told her so, and told everyone else too—his daughters, people in the office, sometimes

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even complete strangers (for instance, once a man he had shared a rickshaw with). Also how he was ready to tear himself into a thousand pieces, or lie down in the middle of the main bazaar by the clock tower and let all who came trample on him with their feet if by such an action he could save her one moment's anxiety. In this present misfortune there was of course a lot of anxiety. There was not only the moral hardship but also the practical one of having his salary held in arrears while the inquiry took its course. Already they had spent whatever his wife had managed to lay by and had had to sell the one or two pieces of jewellery that still remained from her dowry. Now they were dependent for their household expenses on whatever their sons-in-law could contribute. It was a humiliating position for a proud man, but what was to be done? There was no alternative, he could not allow his wife to starve. But when his daughters came to the house and untied the money from the ends of their saris to give to their mother, he could not restrain his tears from flowing. His daughters were not as sympathetic towards him as his wife. They made no attempts to comfort him but looked at him in a way that made him feel worse. Then he would leave them and go to lie down on his bed. His daughters stayed for a while, but he did not come out again. He could hear them talking to their mother, and sometimes he heard sounds like the mother weeping. These sounds were unbearable to him and he had to cover his head with the pillow so as not to hear them.

AFTER THAT FIRST visit to the coffee house, he continued to go every day. It was good to meet his friends again. He had always loved company. In the past, when he was still king in his own office, people had dropped in on him there all day long. At eleven o'clock they had all adjourned to the coffee house where they had drunk many cups of coffee and smoked many cigarettes and talked on many subjects. He had talked the most, and everyone had listened to and applauded him. But nowadays everything was changed. It was not only that he could not afford to drink coffee or pay for his own cigarettes; other things too were not as they had been. He himself was not as he had been. He had always been so gay and made jokes at which everyone laughed. Once he had jumped up on the table and had executed a dance there. He had stamped his feet and made ankle bell noises with his tongue. And how they had laughed, standing round him in a circle—his friends and other customers, even the waiters. They had clapped their hands and spurred him on till he had jumped from the table—hands extended like a diver—and landed amid cheers and laughter in the arms held out to catch him.

Although nothing like that happened now, he continued to visit the coffee house regularly every morning, and soon he was going regularly every evening too. There was usually a large party of friends, but one evening when he went there was no one—only a waiter flicking around with his dirty cloth and a silent old widower, a regular customer, eating vegetable cutlets. The waiter was surly—he always had been, even in the days when Sri Prakash was still able to hand out tips—and it was only after repeated inquiries that he condescended to say that, didn't Sri Prakash know? Hadn't they told him? They had all gone to Moti Bagh for a moonlight picnic with mangoes. Sri Prakash slapped his forehead, pretending he had known about it but had forgotten. It was an unconvincing performance and the waiter sneered, but Sri Prakash could not worry about that now. He had to concentrate on getting himself out of the coffee house without showing how he was feeling.

He walked in the street by himself. It was evening, there was a lot of traffic and the shops were full. Hawkers with trays bumped in and out of the crowds on the sidewalks. On one side the sky was melting in a rush of orange while on the other the evening star sparkled, alone and aloof, like a jewel made of ice. Exquisite hour—hour of high thoughts and romantic feelings! It had always been so for Sri Prakash and was so still. Only where was he to go, who was there to share with him the longing for beauty that flooded his heart?

"Oh-ho, oh-ho! Just see who is here!"

Someone had bumped against him in the crowd, now stood and held his arms in a gesture of affectionate greeting. It was the last person Sri Prakash would have wished to

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meet—Goel, the father of Miss Nimmi, his accuser, his enemy, the cause of his ruin and tears. Goel seemed genuinely delighted by this meeting; he continued to hold Sri Prakash by the arms and even squeezed them to show his pleasure. Sri Prakash jerked himself free and hurried away. The other followed him; he protested at this unfriendliness, demanded to know its cause. He claimed a misunderstanding. He followed Sri Prakash so close that he trod on his heels. Then Sri Prakash stood still and turned round.

"Forgive me," said Goel. He meant for treading on his heels; he even made the traditional self-humbling gesture of one seeking forgiveness. They stood facing each other. They were about the same height—both were short and plump, though Goel was flabbier. Like Prakash, he also was bald as a ball.

Sri Prakash could hardly believe his ears; Goel was asking him to come home with him. He insisted, he said he had some bottles of country liquor at home, and what good luck that he should have run into Sri Prakash just at this moment when he had been wondering what good friend he could invite to come and share them with him? When Sri Prakash indignantly refused, tried to walk on, Goel held on to him. "Why not?" he insisted. "Where else will you go?"

Then Sri Prakash remembered where everyone else had gone. The moonlight picnic at Moti Bagh was an annual outing. The procedure was always the same. The friends hired a bus and, together with their baskets of mangoes and crates of local whisky, they had themselves driven out to Moti Bagh. They sang boisterous songs all the way. At Moti Bagh they cut up some of the mangoes and sucked the juice out of others. Their mouths became sticky and sweet and this taste might have become unpleasant if they had not kept washing it out with the whisky. They became very rowdy. They waited for the moon to rise. When it did, their mood changed. Moti Bagh was a famous beauty spot, an abandoned and half ruined palace built by a seventeenth-century prince at the height of his own glory and that of his dynasty. When the moon shone on it, it became spectral, a marble ghost that evoked thoughts of the passing of all earthly things. Poems were recited, sad songs sung, a few tears flowed. Someone played the flute—as a matter of fact, this was Sri Prakash who had always taken a prominent part in these outings. But this year they had gone without him.

GOEL DID NOT LIVE in a very nice part of town. The bazaar, though once quite prosperous, now catered mainly for poorer people; the rooms on top of the shops had been converted into one-night hotels. Goel's house, which was in a network of alleys leading off from this bazaar, would have been difficult to find for anyone unfamiliar with the geography of the locality. The geography of his house was also quite intricate as every available bit of space—in the courtyard, galleries, and on staircase landings—had been partitioned between different tenants. Goel and his daughter Miss Nimmi had one long narrow room to themselves; they had strung a piece of string half-way across which served as both clothes line and partition. At first Sri Prakash thought the room was empty, but after they had been there for some time Goel shouted "Oy!" When he received no answer, he pushed aside the pieces of clothing hanging from the string and revealed Miss Nimmi lying fast asleep on a mat on the floor.

Goel had to shout several more times before she woke up. Then she rose from the mat—very slowly, as if struggling up from the depths of a sea of sleep—and sat there, blinking. Her sari had slipped from her breasts but she did not notice. She also did not notice that they had a visitor. She was always slow in everything, slow and heavy. Her father had to shout "Don't you see who has come?" She blinked a few more times, and then very, very slowly she smiled and very, very slowly she lifted the sari to cover her breasts.

Goel told her to find two glasses. She got up and rummaged around the room. After a time she said there was only one. Sri Prakash said it didn't matter, he had to go anyway; he said he was in a hurry, he had to catch a bus for Moti Bagh where his friends awaited him. He got up but his host pressed him down again, asking what was the point of going now, why not stay here, they would have a good time together. "Look," Goel said, "I've got money"; he emptied out his pocket

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and he did have money—a wad of bank notes, God knew where they had come from. He let Sri Prakash look his fill at them before putting them back. He said, "Let's go to Badshahbad, we'll take the liquor and mangoes and we'll have a moonlight picnic of our own." He got very excited by this idea. Sri Prakash said neither yes nor no. Goel told Miss Nimmi to change into something nice and she disappeared behind the clothes line and got busy there. Sri Prakash did not look in that direction, but the room was saturated by her the way a store room in which ripe apples are kept becomes saturated by their savour and smell.

BADSHAHBAD WAS NOT as far off as Moti Bagh—in fact, it was just at the outskirts of town and could be reached very quickly. It too was a deserted pleasure palace but had been built two centuries later than the one at Moti Bagh and as a rather gaudy imitation of it. However, now in the dark it looked just the same. The surrounding silence and emptiness, the smell of dust, the occasional jackal cry, were also the same. At first Sri Prakash felt rather depressed but his mood changed after he had drunk some of Goel's liquor. Goel was determined to have a good time, and Miss Nimmi, though silent, also seemed to be enjoying herself. She was cutting up the mangoes and eating rather a lot of them. The three of them sat in the dark, waiting for the moon to rise.

Goel fell into a reminiscent mood. He began to recall all the wonderful things he had done in his life: how he had sold a second-hand imported car for Rs. 50,000, and once he had arranged false passports for a whole party of Sikh carpenters. All these activities had brought in fat commissions for himself—amply deserved, because everything had been achieved only through his good contacts. That was his greatest asset in life—his contacts, all the important people he had access to. He ticked them off on his fingers: the Under Secretary to the Welfare Ministry, the Deputy Minister of Mines and Fuel, all the top officers in the income tax department. He challenged Sri Prakash, he said: "Name any big name, go as high as you like, and see if I don't know him."

Sri Prakash got excited, he cried: "My goodness! Big names—big people—whenever there was anything to be done, everyone said 'Ask Sri Prakash, he knows everyone, he has them all in his pocket.' Once there was a function to felicitate our departmental Secretary on his promotion. The principal organisers came to me and said 'Sri Prakash, we need a VIP to grace the occasion.' I replied 'I will get you the Chief Minister himself, just wait and see.' And I did. I went to him, I said 'Sir, kindly give us the honour of your presence' and he replied 'Certainly, Sri Prakash, with pleasure.' There and then he told his secretary to make a note of the appointment."

"When I go into the Secretariat building," Goel said, "the peons stand up and salute. I don't bother with appointments. The personal assistant opens the big shot's door and says 'Sir, Goel has come.' They know I don't come with empty hands. I slip it under their papers, no word spoken, they don't notice, I don't notice. The figures are all fixed, no need to haggle, 1000 to an Under Secretary, 2000 to a Deputy. Each has his price."

Goel smiled and drank. Sri Prakash also drank. The liquor, illicitly distilled, had a foul and acrid taste. Sri Prakash remembered reading in the papers quite recently how a whole colony of labourers had been wiped out through drinking illicit country liquor. Nothing could be done for them, it had rotted them through and through.

Goel said "Let alone the Secretaries, there are also the Ministers to be taken care of. Some of them are very costly. Naturally, their term is short, no one can tell what will happen at the next elections. So their mouths are always wide open. You must be knowing Dev Kishan—"

"Dev Kishan!" Sri Prakash cried. "He and I are like that! Like that!" He held up two fingers, pressed close together.

"There was some work in his Ministry, it was rather a tricky job and I was called in. I went to his house and came straight to the point. 'Dev Kishan Sahib,' I said—"

Sri Prakash suddenly lost his temper: "Dev Kishan is not this type at all!" When Goel sniggered, he became more excited: "A person like you would not understand a person like him at all. And I don't believe you went to his house—"

"Come with me right now!" Goel shouted.

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"We will go together to his house and then you will see how he receives me—"

"Not Dev Kishan!" Sri Prakash shouted back. "Someone else—not he—"

"He! The same!"

Although they were both shouting at the tops of their voices, Miss Nimmi went on placidly sucking mangoes. Probably the subject was of no interest to her; probably also she was used to people getting excited while drinking.

"As a matter of fact," Goel sneered, "shall I let you into a secret—his mouth is open wider than anyone's. They call him The Pit because he can never get enough, your Dev Kishan."

"I don't believe you," Sri Prakash said again, though not so fervently now. He really had no particular interest in defending this man. It was only that the mention of his name had called up a rather painful memory.

WHEN HIS TROUBLES had first begun, Sri Prakash had run around from one influential person to another. Most people would not receive him, and he had had to content himself with sitting waiting in their outer offices and putting his case to such of their clerical staff as would listen. Dev Kishan however was one of the few people who *had* received him. Sri Prakash had been ushered into his ministerial office which had two air-conditioners and an inscribed portrait of the President of India. Dev Kishan had sat behind an enormous desk but he had not asked Sri Prakash to take the chair opposite. He had not looked at Sri Prakash either but had fixed his gaze above his head. Sri Prakash wanted to plead, to explain—he had come ready to do so—if necessary go down on his knees, but instead he sat quite still while Dev Kishan told him that a departmental inquiry must be allowed to proceed according to rule. Then Sri Prakash had quietly departed, passing through the outer office with his head lowered and with nothing to say for himself whatsoever. He had not spoken for a long while afterwards. He kept thinking—he was still thinking—of the way Dev Kishan had looked above his head. His eyes had seemed to be gazing far beyond Sri Prakash, deep into state matters, and Sri Prakash had felt like a fly that had got in and deserved to be swatted.

Goel did not want to quarrel any more. He had come on a picnic, he had spent money on liquor and mangoes and the hiring of a horse carriage to bring them here. He expected a good time in return. He refilled their glasses while reminiscing about other outings he had enjoyed in the past. He told Sri Prakash of the time he and some friends had consumed one dozen bottles of liquor at a sitting and had become very merry. He nudged Sri Prakash and said "Girls were also brought." He said this in a low voice, so that Miss Nimmi would not hear, and brought his face close to Sri Prakash. Sri Prakash felt a desire to throw the contents of his glass into this face. He imagined that the liquor contained acid and what would happen. He was filled with such strong emotion that something, some release was necessary, but instead of throwing the liquor in his host's face, he emptied it on the ground in a childishly angry gesture. Goel gave a cry of astonishment, Miss Nimmi stopped half way in the sucking of a mango.

Just then the moon rose. The palace trembled into view and stood there, melting in moonlight. Sri Prakash left his companions and went toward it as one drawn toward a mirage. It did not disappear as he approached, but it did turn out to be locked. He peered through the glass doors and could just make out the sleeping form of a watchman curled up on the floor. The interior was lit only by the palest beams filtering in from outside. By day there were too many curlicued arches and coloured chandeliers, too many plaster leaves and scrolls: but now in the moonlight everything looked as it should. Overcome by its beauty and other sensations, Sri Prakash sat down on the steps and wept. He had his face buried in his hands and could not stop.

After a while Goel joined him. He sat beside him on the steps. Goel began to talk about the passing away of all earthly things, the death of kings and pariah dogs alike. He waved his hand toward the abandoned pleasure palace, he said, "Where are they all, where have they gone?" Although these reflections were perfectly acceptable—probably at this very moment Sri Prakash's friends were making the same ones at their picnic in Moti Bagh—nevertheless, coming from Goel, Sri Prakash did not want to hear them. He felt Goel had no right to them. What did he know

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of philosophy and history—indeed of anything except drinking and bribery? Sri Prakash lifted his head; irritation had dried his tears.

He said "Do you know what the Nawab Sahib Ghalib Hasan said when they came to tell him the enemy was at the gate?"

Goel did not know—he knew nothing—he hardly knew who the Nawab Sahib Ghalib Hasan was. To cover his ignorance, he waved his hand again and repeated, "Where are they all, where have they gone?"

Sri Prakash began to instruct him. He knew a lot about the Nawab, who had always been one of his heroes. Abandoning the palace at Moti Bagh, the Nawab had built himself this costly new palace here at Badshahbad and filled it with his favourites. There had been poets and musicians and dancing girls, cooks and wine-tasters, a French barber, an Irish cavalry officer; also a menagerie which included a lion and an octopus. The Nawab himself wrote poetry which he read aloud to his courtiers and to the girls who massaged his feet and scented them. It was during such a session that messengers had come to tell him the enemy was at the gate. He had answered by reciting these verses which Sri Prakash now quoted to Goel: "*When in her arms, what is the drum of war? the sword of battle? nay, even the ancient whistle of bony-headed Death?*"

"Ah!" said Goel, laying his hand on his chest to show how deeply he was affected.

Quite pleased with this reaction, Sri Prakash repeated the quotation. Then he quoted more verses written by the Nawab. Goel turned out to be an appreciative listener. He swayed his head and sometimes shouted out loud in applause the way connoisseurs shout when a musician plays a note, a dancer executes a step showing more than human skill. Sri Prakash began rather to enjoy himself. It had been a long time since anyone had cared to listen to him reciting poetry. His wife and daughters—he had always regretted it—had no taste for poetry at all; nor for music either, which he loved so much.

But then Goel made a mistake. Overcome by appreciation, he repeated a line that Sri Prakash had just quoted to him: "*O rose of my love, where have your petals fallen?*" But Goel's voice, which was vulgar and drunken, degraded these beautiful words. Suddenly Sri Prakash turned on him. He called him all the insulting names he could think of such as liar, swindler, blackmailer, and drunkard. Goel continued to sit there placidly, even nodding once or twice as if he agreed. Perhaps he was too drunk to hear or care; or perhaps he had been called these names so often that he had learned to accept them. But this passive attitude was frustrating for Sri Prakash; he ran out of insults and fell silent.

After a while he said, "Why did you do it? For myself I don't care—but what about my wife and family? Why should their lives be ruined? Tell me that."

GOEL HAD NO ANSWER except a murmur of sympathy. As if grateful for this sympathy, Sri Prakash began to tell him moving incidents from his married life. They all illustrated the fact that his wife was an angel, a saint. The more Sri Prakash knew her the more he marvelled. In her he had studied all womanhood and had come to the conclusion that women are goddesses at whose feet men must fall down and worship. He himself had got into the habit of doing so quite often. Not now so much any more—his spirits were too low, he felt himself unworthy—but in the past when things were still well with him. Then he would come home from a late night outing with friends to find her nodding in the kitchen waiting for him to serve him his meal. He would be overcome with love and admiration for her. With a cry that startled her from her sleep, he would fall down at her feet and lift the hem of her garment to press it to his lips. Although she tried to make him rise, he would not do so; he wanted to stay down there to make it clear how humble he was in relation to her greatness. Then she undressed him right there where he lay on the floor and tried to get him to bed. Sometimes she had to lift him up in her arms—he had always been a small man—and he loved that, he lay in her arms with his eyes shut and felt himself a child enfolded in its mother's love. "Mother," he would murmur in ecstasy, as she staggered with him to the bed.

Goel had fallen asleep. Sri Prakash was sorry, for although he did not esteem Goel as a person, he felt the need of someone to

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talk to. Not only about his wife; there were many other subjects, many thoughts he longed to share. It was like that with him sometimes. His heart was so full, so weighted with feeling, that he longed to fling it somewhere—to someone—or, failing someone, up to the moon that was so still and looked down at him from heaven. But there *was* someone; there was Miss Nimmi. She had remained where they had left her by the basket of mangoes and the bottles. She had finished eating mangoes. She did not seem to mind being left alone nor did she seem impatient to go home but just content to wait till they were ready. She sat with her hands folded and looked in front of her at the bare and dusty earth.

This patient pose was characteristic of her. It was the way she had sat in Sri Prakash's office when she had come to ask him for a job. That was why he had kept telling her to come back—to have the pleasure of seeing her in his office ready to wait for as long as he wanted. She had reminded him of a chicken sitting plump and cooked on a dish on a table. By the third day he had begun to call her his little chicken. "Fall to!" he would suddenly cry and make the motion of someone who grabbed from a dish and fell to eating. Of course she hadn't known what he meant, but she had smiled all the same.

"Fall to!" he cried now as he joined her on the ground among the empty bottles. And now too she smiled. Like the palace floating behind her, she was transformed and made beautiful by moonlight. It veiled her rather coarse features and her skin pitted by an attack of smallpox in childhood.

He moved up close to her. Her breasts, as warm as they were plump, came swelling out of her bodice and he put his hand on them: but respectfully, almost with awe, so that there was no harm in her leaving it there. "Where is Papa?" she asked.

"Asleep. You need not worry."

Very gently and delicately he stroked her breasts. Then he kissed her mouth, tasting the mango there. She let all this be done to her. It had been the same in his office—she had always kept quite still, only occassionally glancing over her shoulder to make sure no one was coming. She did the same now, glancing toward her father.

"You need not worry," Sri Prakash said again. "He has drunk a lot. He won't wake up."

"He *is* waking up."

Sri Prakash let go of her and they both looked towards Goel left behind in front of the palace. He was trying to stretch himself out more comfortably along the steps but instead he rolled down them. It was not far, and the ground seemed to receive him softly. He did not move but remained lying there.

"Is he all right?' Miss Nimmi asked.

"Of course he is all right. What could happen to *him*?" Sri Prakash spoke bitterly. He took his hand away from her; his mood was spoiled. He said "Why did you let him do it to me? What harm have I done to him? Or to you? Answer."

She had no answer. There was none, he knew. She could not say that he had harmed her, had done anything bad. Was it bad to love a person? To adore and worship the way he had done? Those moments in his office had been pure, and his feelings as sacred as if he were visiting a shrine to place flowers there at the feet of the goddess.

"Why?" he asked again. "What did I do to you?"

"That is what Papa kept asking, 'What did he do to you?' When I said you did nothing, he got very angry. He kept asking questions, he would not stop. Sometimes he woke me up at night to ask."

Sri Prakash pressed his face into her neck. "What sort of questions?" he murmured from out of there.

"He asked 'Where did he put his hand?' When I couldn't remember, he asked 'Here?' So I had to say yes. Because you did."

"Yes," he murmured. "Yes, I did." And he did it again and she let him.

She said, "Papa shouted and screamed. He hit his head against the wall. But it wasn't only that—there were other things. He was going through a lot of other troubles at that time. Two men kept coming. They told him he would have to go to jail again. Papa is very frightened of going to jail. When he was there before, he came out so thin." She showed how with her finger. "He lost fifty pound in there."

SRI PRAKASH remembered Goel's demented state in those days. He had come to him many times, threatening, demanding money. He had looked like a madman, and

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Sri Prakash—still sitting secure behind his desk then, safe in his office—had treated him like one. "Go to hell," he had told him. "Do what you like." And the last time he had said that, Goel had pounded the desk between them and thrust his face forward into Sri Prakash's, "Then you will see!" he had screamed. "You will see and learn!" He had really looked like a madman—even with foam at his mouth. Sri Prakash had felt uneasy but nevertheless had laughed in the other's face and blown a smoke ring.

Miss Nimmi said, "I was very frightened. Papa was in a terrible mood. He said he would teach you a lesson you would not forget. He said 'Why should I be the only person in this world to suffer blows and kicks? Let someone else also have a few of these.' But afterwards those two men stopped coming, and then Papa was much better. He was cheerful again and brought me a present, a little mirror like a heart. And then he was sorry about you. He tried to go to your office again, to change his report, but they said it was too late. I cried when he came back and told me that."

"You cried? You cried for me?" Sri Prakash was moved.

"Yes, and Papa also was sad for you."

Goel was still lying at the foot of the steps where he had rolled down. Sri Prakash did not feel unkindly towards him—on the contrary, he even felt quite sorry for him. But his greatest wish with regard to him at the moment was that he would go on sleeping. Sri Prakash did not want to be disturbed in his private conversation with Miss Nimmi. In his mind he prayed for sufficient time, that they might not be interrupted by her father.

"I cried so much that Papa did everything he could to make me feel better. He brought me more presents—sweets and a piece of cloth. When still I went on crying, he said 'What is to be done? It is his fate.' "

"He is right," Sri Prakash said. He too spoke only to soothe her. He did not want Miss Nimmi to be upset in any way. He just wanted her to be as she always was and to keep still so that he could adore her to his heart's content. He raised the hem of her sari to his lips, the way he did to his wife, and he also murmured "Goddess" to her the way he did to his wife—worshipping all women in her, their goodness and beauty.

Still Photos

She dreams of traffic accidents at night
when you you you do not come back to her—
the telephone ringing and ringing and no one there,
the telephone ringing and she does not hear
and she stands at the stair,
mute and violated in a white nightgown.

When the policeman comes to the door she does not answer,
not even to call out "Who's there?"
Trembling, with the hands of an alcoholic,
she falls down,
pressing her face to the carpet,

and holds it, not able to pass out cold.
Not even when the cop says "Watch it, missus;"
not even in dreams, those second chances:
waking, clear eyed, to terror; heartbeats,
the exact calibrations, the empty rooms.

Kathleen Spivack

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Charles Frankel

The Plight of the Humanist Intellectual

RECENT SUCCESSES in persuading various authorities in both the U.S.A. and Europe to approve significant increases in cultural support could possibly be taken as indication that the humanities have assumed a new importance in the life of Western nations. This may be so although there is an equal chance that this growth in funds is merely the result of a cooling off of past enthusiasms for the physical and social sciences. In any case, whether or not substantial assistance for "culture" continues, it would be a mistake to suppose that the humanities and humanist intellectuals have finally managed to escape the plight which has been their lot for the past fifty years or more. The dominant self-image within the humanistic camp is still that of the underpaid scholar who is condescended to or rejected by a materialistic society, put off in the corner of a university, and yet remains the only true intellectual afoot in the world.

THIS VIEW OF the humanist intellectual is, of course, scarcely new. The oddity of the humanities as perceived by humanists themselves has been a standing theme of Western intellectual history. In the *Ion,* Plato discusses the mystery of the stage actor—the man who, not unusually, seems to combine in the most extraordinary manner the qualities of stupidity and inspiration, inarticulateness and eloquence, shallowness and profundity. The stage actor exemplified, to Plato, the curious character of the faculty of intuition or insight on which poets and, even more perplexingly, philosophers seemed to rely. There are individuals, as Plato suggested, who seem to discover truths without, as it were, earning the right to do so. They can't marshal their arguments logically; they can't be explicit about the evidence on which they lean; they have no clearly teachable intellectual method. Only too often they seem themselves not quite to realise what it is that they are saying. They are people who seem simply to have been struck by truth, to have been invaded and taken over by it: hedonists of truth, enjoying it for its momentary delight, and not thinking of how to use it for practical purposes, or even how to organise the pursuit of it so that it will continue to be discovered in the future.

Philosophy, as conceived by Plato, is an odd discipline that falls somewhere between poetry and logic, inspiration and analysis. Socrates' "demon" is essential in understanding Socrates: the philosopher is not only a dialectician but a kind of shaman as well. In his book *The Greeks and the Irrational,* Eric Dodds suggests that Platonic dualism was an effort to rationalise and secularise the idea of the wise man as seer. The mystic and religious visionary had made the original claim to superior insight into another world, and Platonic dualism sought to take over that claim and validate it for its rightful heir, the philosopher. The view assigns to the professional thinker concerned with humanistic subjects a higher than secular role: such a man is of this world but of another as well. And when Plato turns and views this figure ironically, he becomes a figure of comedy and tragedy—a figure suf-

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fering from intellectual sunstroke, bewildered in the ways of the world, alienated from it, murdered by it. That ambiguous self-image—an image of martyrdom, of nobility and impotence, of superiority to all the other intellectual pursuits and yet of inferiority to them in consistent result and in comparative power and influence—has risen and fallen through the centuries, but has never quite disappeared from the traditions of humanist intellectuals. It is this theme in its modern variations which I here pursue.

AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, we must define terms. What is an "intellectual"?

I would suggest that we mean by the term a person, first, who is a specialist in certain highly complex skills, usually involving the use of abstract symbols. He is the master of a particular field of inquiry or a particular kind of mental operation that requires several years of advanced training or laborious preparation. Yet mastery of a given field does not in itself make one an intellectual. To be an intellectual, second, an individual must use his discipline or art as a base from which to comment on public matters. Of course, he may use that base not intellectually but simply because it gives him social prestige and authority. It is not unusual to find the intellectual who is, say, a responsible specialist in psychology and an irresponsible amateur in politics. None the less, the biologist who studies population growth, the physicist who discusses the ABM, the philosopher who deals with problems in criminology, are all applying their disciplines to matters of public concern, and, of course, sometimes they do so legitimately and responsibly.

In sum, the term "intellectual" can be used, I think, to designate, in a wholly neutral and descriptive manner, a particular social category of people. Intellectuals need not be intelligent in the commonplace meaning of the term—alert to new information, flexible in response, capable of grasping facts and implications quickly and surely, adept at problem-solving. Intelligent people need not be intellectuals. Similarly, it is a presumption—indeed, a prejudice—to assert that intellectuals are always the best friends of intellect or intelligence. J.-J. Rousseau and D. H. Lawrence are prominent examples of intellectuals who have been anti-intellectual. Conversely, many critics of intellectuals have been partisans of the necessity and beauty of abstract ideas: consider Plato, the critic of the Sophists, and Julien Benda, accuser of "the clerks." To be an "intellectual" is to perform a certain role which can be performed well or badly, honourably or dishonourably. And to criticise the performance of intellectuals is not at all to say that the role they perform is inessential or mischievous.

As for the term "humanist," let me at this stage simply define by enumeration. Individuals engaged in the study or practice of literature, philosophy, comparative religion, jurisprudence, archaeology, history, musicology, fine arts—this is the kind of person I have in mind when I speak of the humanist intellectual. Obviously, there are also scientific intellectuals, and intellectuals based in the social sciences.

What, then, is the special plight, of which I have spoken, of the humanist intellectual in modern society?

IN MY VIEW, his present state can best be understood as the product of two kinds of experience, the first historical and the second material. From the historical standpoint, there are three factors, among many, that are particularly important in understanding the traditions and self-image of the modern humanist intellectual.

First, it was the humanists who made a revolution, or at least were credited with making a revolution. Tocqueville believed that the most distinctive feature of the French Revolution was the fact that it represented the first great political upheaval produced by men of letters. In his *L'Ancien régime et la révolution* (1856), he stated:

> "Our writers ended up by giving the Frenchman the instincts, the turn of mind, the tastes, and even the eccentricities characteristic of the literary man. And when the time came for action, these literary propensities were imported into the political arena."

Indeed Tocqueville maintained that what is regarded as *l'esprit français* was almost entirely a creation of the French literary men of the 18th century. The Revolution left its imprint on the French mind in the form of a penchant for abstract theories of government and a fondness for slogans like the rights of man.

Whether or not we agree with Tocqueville's estimate of the importance of men of letters in bringing about the French Revolution, it is plain that the history of the humanist intellectual in the modern world is inextricably intertwined with the history and memory of that Revolution, and of revolution in general. The post-medieval

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era has a concept of revolution not possessed by its predecessors. "Revolution" has meant, in our world, not simply the overthrow of an established régime or the institution of a different form of government or property representing an altered distribution of power in society. It has meant a change in conception of the ends of life, a new hope—indeed, usually a new plan—for the remaking of human nature. It has represented a secularisation of supernatural theories of conversion and salvation. In this conception of Revolution the hand of the humanist intellectual, seeking meaning, design, and the satisfaction of dramatic coherence in history, can be seen. (The first great modern revolution, the Puritan Revolution, was also in this style, and writers and men of letters also played a part in it.)

The influence on humanist intellectuals of the French Revolution, and, more generally, of the idea and ideal of revolution, has been a lasting one. In 1789, many humanist intellectuals in countries other than France sympathised with the Revolution, only to turn bitterly against it as the abstract ideas of the *philosophes* gave way to concrete tyranny and terror. And the same cycle of conversion and deconversion, of moral-political accusation and counter-accusation, has been repeated in the 20th century in relation to the Russian Revolution. In the formation of the modern humanist-intellectual personality, specifically his moral-political personality, revolution may be said to play the part of the decisive traumatic experience. There has been a continuing war within the intellectual camp—a war that, I think, is the major item on the hidden agenda that has preoccupied intellectuals for the past two hundred years—and it has been the war between those who believe in the idea of revolution and those who don't—the Party of Progress *v.* the Party of Order, the Left *v.* the Right.

AN IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCE of this has been that humanist intellectuals, whether on the Left or the Right, have by and large taken themselves out of the political mainstream. They have pursued interests at the fringe of the political interests of the larger society. In England and America, even in France and Germany, the votes and loyalties of most people are determined by accidents of tradition and belief, and by bread-and-butter issues, which humanistic intellectuals are likely to find too small, too transitory, to lend themselves to the language of ultimate moral decision. Oddly, when intellectuals say, "*Engagez-vous!*" they rarely mean join a centrist party. They mean: Quit the great moderate, myopic, confused majority, and show where you stand on the issue of man's ultimate destiny.

From the viewpoint of the modern humanist intellectual, political action thus tends to be perceived as a symbolic gesture, the announcement of one's role in the great drama of history. In a section of her memoirs, Simone de Beauvoir recalls that she and Sartre once had a long discussion about whether to attend a movie or take their place among the marchers in a street demonstration. They decided, after much solemn talk, that regardless of their personal desires, history required their presence at the demonstration. What the demonstration itself accomplished, Mme de Beauvoir, as I recall, does not say. This sense of politics as theatre, as demonstration in and for itself, has been, I think, a salient characteristic of humanist intellectual history for the past two centuries.

THE SECOND HISTORICAL CIRCUMSTANCE which has contributed to the contemporary plight of the humanist intellectual is his role as the descendant of the medieval monk. The intellectual is, as it were, the secularised priest of modern society. Like the monks, the first prototypical modern intellectuals—Erasmus, Voltaire—delivered pronouncements on society from the standpoint, as they saw it, of transcendent truths. For Erasmus and Voltaire, these truths were principles of nature, not of Revelation. None the less, the essential point is that the modern intellectual judged society from above or from outside, observing the passing scene and criticising it in the light of what he felt were lasting truths.

In order to fulfil this role as the detached conscience of society, the intellectual did not usually allow himself to become wholly part of the workaday world. There were exceptions, most notably in the United States, where one thinks of such men as Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, or Woodrow Wilson and Adlai Stevenson. But none of these figures, not even Franklin, was an intellectual in the full sociological sense. None, that is, was a full-time member of what the Duke of Wellington called "the scribbling set." Their public eminence was not based on their standing as critics of society. In this sense, America's first great humanist intellectual was probably Ralph Waldo Emerson. And it was a fellow member of

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the Concord literary community, Nathaniel Hawthorne, who provided us with an acidulous commentary on Emerson and other intellectuals who, setting themselves apart from and above society, still sought to remain its conscience. In *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), a critique of Brook Farm and the Transcendentalists' efforts to reform the world, Hawthorne presents a description of the Brook Farmers.

> "They will keep no friend, unless he make himself the mirror of their purpose; they will smite and slay you, and trample your dead corpse under foot, all the most readily, if you take the first step with them, and cannot take the second, and the third, and every other step of their terribly straight path. They have an idol to which they consecrate themselves high priest . . . and never once seem to suspect . . . that this false deity, in whose iron features, immitigable to all the rest of mankind, they see only benignity and love, is but a spectrum of that very priest himself, projected upon the surrounding darkness."

Hawthorne himself experimented with life at Brook Farm for a period of six or seven months. *The Blithedale Romance* gives his reasons for leaving the community:

> "I felt myself getting quite out of my reckoning with regard to the existing state of the world. I was beginning to lose the sense of what kind of a world it was, among innumerable schemes of what it might or ought to be. It was impossible . . . not to imbibe the idea that everything in nature and human existence was fluid, or fast becoming so. . . . Our great globe floated in the atmosphere of infinite space like an insubstantial bubble. No sagacious man will long retain his sagacity, if he live exclusively among reformers and progressive people, without periodically returning into the settled system of things, to correct himself by a new observation from that old standpoint.
>
> "It was now time for me, therefore, to go and hold a little talk with the conservatives, the writers of the *North American Review*, the merchants, the politicians, the Cambridge men, and all those respectable old blockheads who still, in this intangibility and mistiness of affairs, kept a deathgrip on one or two ideas which had not come into vogue since yesterday morning."

THE FINAL HISTORICAL FACTOR to be considered in appraising the condition of the humanist intellectual is his peculiar relation to science. The current antipathy between science and the humanities is a relatively recent development. The great intellectuals of the 17th and 18th centuries—Hume, Locke, Voltaire, Kant—were not anti-scientific; on the contrary. In fact, science was a central source of fascination for humanist intellectuals in this period. It stood behind slogans like "reason and humanity" and "progress and enlightenment." Even Jonathan Edwards, who was a devout, indeed in the literal sense a reactionary Calvinist, was profoundly influenced by Locke and Newton, and would have thought it impossible to defend any view of the human condition that did not give serious and respectful attention to the sciences.

It was the French Revolution, with its specious claims to be putting science into practice, coupled with the advance of technology and the cruelties of early industrialisation, that turned loose a flood of anti-scientific tendencies. Since the first part of the 19th century, humanist intellectuals have found themselves caught in yet another kind of internal dilemma, this time centering on their attitude towards science.

By and large, there have been two responses among humanists. One has been to ape the sciences, turning literary criticism into the history of literature, or philosophy into a form of semantics. The other has been to demonstrate the validity and importance of the humanities by attempting to carve out some distinct and special realm—values, the ontological, the mythic—whose truths are open to the methods of the humanities and closed to other methods. Those who take this stand, who insist on the peculiar, superior cognitive value of the humanities, are almost inevitably drawn into a struggle against the influence and prestige of science. Almost every Department of English contains a nest of such rebels against the allegedly prevalent scientistic and mechanistic tendencies of the age.

BUT OVER AND ABOVE the humanist intellectual's concern with revolution, his role as secularised priest, and his relation to science, there are other circumstances, related not to historical factors but to the intimate material circumstances of his daily life, which also serve to mould his attitudes and preoccupations. Space precludes discussion of all of these; attention to a few will have to suffice.

Work is a fundamental experience of mankind. The intellectual's work—at least the work which he regards as his true or real work—is different in fundamental ways from that of most of the rest of the human species. The peasant must fit his work to the seasons, the sun, the bodily schedules of animals. The worker must punch the time clock, work with others in close coordination, accept external authority. The humanist intellectual, in contrast, has relatively few fixed commitments a week. He tends to regard all forms of collective effort, like committees and faculty meetings, as interruptions of his work; and while

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he may enjoy his colleagues' companionship and be stimulated by them, he knows that when he is genuinely serious he is alone with paper and pencil, and taking a chance on his own ideas.

Anyone who carelessly generalised from such an experience of work—and people who should know better have done so—might be led to think that labour is privatising, that social routine and organisation are onerous forms of enslavement, and that society can be based entirely on the principle of individual voluntary commitment. He might think, too, that what men and women want when they go to work is intensity of feeling, the opportunities and risks of creative effort, and freedom from external authority. And if he discovered that people didn't feel this way, he might conclude that this proved that their work had made them torpid and boorish. Not all, perhaps not most, humanist intellectuals have held these parochial notions of work, actual or ideal. But the utopias designed by humanist intellectuals often carry tell-tale marks, nevertheless, of the occupational bias of a special group.

SECOND, THE HUMANIST INTELLECTUAL is, by function, a seeker after design, meaning, pattern. Mere foolish chance is likely to repel him, whether he is a dramatist, historian, or philosopher. He may recognise that politics is marked by accidents and triviality, that history is full of contingencies, and yet his soul wants a moral for its tale. It wants stories with a beginning, a middle, and an end. From this point of view, there is bound to be a persistent attraction for humanist intellectuals in great theories of history that give meaning to seemingly unrelated events, and in programmes for social reform that look like comprehensive plans and not simply *ad hoc* responses to scattered problems. Socialism, we should recall, has been espoused by many intellectuals who have never studied economics. This does not prove that socialism is unsound as an economic doctrine, but it suggests that its perennial appeal in intellectual circles lies in a good deal more than its economic theories. Similarly, the conservatism of humanist intellectuals is not so much a specific commitment to the defence of what exists—many intellectual conservatives characteristically favour fundamental reforms—but a reaction against what they regard as the *hubris* of rationalism. It reflects the ideological political concerns of a specialised group.

FINALLY, IN HIS WORK, the humanist intellectual is normally compelled to accept criteria of success that are obscure, plural, and wayward. There is little agreement on what the character of a genuine contribution to the humanities is, and yet the professional humanist has a special stake, as only intellectual workers or performing artists and athletes do, in achievements, in the realisation, and the public recognition, of his powers. There is a passage in Chekhov's play, *The Seagull*, where Trigorin gives vent to the conflicting emotions of a writer:

> "Yes. Writing is a pleasure to me, and so is reading the proofs, but no sooner does a book leave the press than it becomes odious to me; it is not what I meant it to be; I made a mistake to write it at all; I am provoked and discouraged. Then the public reads it and says: 'Yes, it is clever and pretty, but not nearly as good as Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*,' and so it will always be. To my dying day I shall hear people say: 'Clever and pretty, clever and pretty' and nothing more; and when I'm gone, those that knew me will say as they pass my grave: 'Here lies Trigorin, a clever writer; but he was not as good as Turgenev.' . . ."

The intellectuals' sense of the ambiguity and randomness of success in their circles may have something to do with the strong predisposition of many of them in favour of equalitarianism. Whatever the explanation, there is, unmistakably, a kind of paradox in the values they have tended historically to espouse.

Culturally, they have represented an essentially aristocratic tradition. They admire and exemplify a kind of work which is inherently arduous and can be undertaken at a high level by only a few. Rarely, indeed, do humanist intellectuals sympathise with the actual tastes of the masses whom they wish to befriend. Yet, on the whole, intellectuals in politics have been a major source of the ideal of equality. One might speculate that a disposition in favour of general and abstract equality, a suspicion that ranking and judging are inevitably sources of injustice, is tempting to people whose careers turn so decisively on comparative appraisals that have a quality of the unpredictable, and sometimes the capricious, about them.

YET, DESPITE THE PLIGHT of the humanist intellectual, he is of course indispensable to modern society. Few of the problems that confront us are intelligible apart from a context which the humanist has special powers to reveal. Consider, as an example, the question of poverty,

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a phenomenon the interpretation of which has changed significantly through history.

In the Middle Ages, poverty signified a defined social status. Just as there were villeins and yeomen, so there were the poor, the propertyless, the unplaced. Under the influence of Calvinism, poverty—at any rate, the poverty of the able-bodied—came to be regarded as a signal of sin or immorality, of unwillingness to work. As people became more secular, "more liberal" as we say, poverty came to be seen in the individual, and in society at large, as a stage on the road to progress, a condition somewhat akin to adolescence.

In the United States, for example, the poverty of the immigrant was viewed as a temporary affliction. Once he learned to speak English and to understand the American way of life, he would move up in the world. A similar evolutionary idea, projected to the rest of the globe, led to the introduction of the term "underdeveloped" as a euphemism for "poor" in describing the emerging nations of Asia and Africa. There was something wrong in being "poor," something final and shameful, whereas the word "underdeveloped" apparently gave these countries the hope that they would soon outgrow their awkward state.

In recent years, perhaps because poverty has not responded to treatment as easily as this diagnosis suggested, two others appear to have replaced it. One is that poverty, like haemophilia, is simply a condition visited on some people, an hereditary illness. The other is that, minus its severer pains, it is really a desirable condition. The poor are likely to be purer; the simple life is inherently the better life. The distractions, rush, and stench of the so-called Affluent Society have resurrected the improbable idea that the poor have a better chance to be virtuous because they have less to tempt them than the rich. We see the resurgence, only slightly disguised, of the cult of the honest peasant associated with Rousseau, the other Genevan, the involuted heir of Calvin.

OUR CHANGING PERSPECTIVES on poverty suggest at least one function that the contemporary humanist intellectual can perform. The instructed reading of literature, the awareness of philosophy and of the hidden role of value judgments, a sense of history—these are irreplaceable conditions for self-awareness and therefore for the development of social policies that are something more than expressions of the prejudices or wispy hopes of a given class, group, or era. "Scientific method," in itself, as the ideas that rise and fall in the social sciences suggest, is not a sufficient protection against provincialism or faddism. The humanities are not cultural frills but indispensable tools for the imaginative comprehension of social problems.

But quite apart from what they might do to advance the understanding of pressing social issues, humanist intellectuals serve an invaluable function. Of all intellectuals, it is they who by tradition have the special role of examining human experience or natural fact in relation to human aspirations, human standards, and the evolution of the human community. Ultimately, says Emerson in *The American Scholar*, "the one thing in the world of value is the active soul." The goal of a humanistic approach to learning is to activate the soul, to bring the self-aware, critical spirit to moral and aesthetic consciousness. At their best, indeed, the humanities are not so much a group of subjects as an attitude or perspective, which can be exemplified in scientific study as well as the study of history or poetry—and which, regrettably, is sometimes more conspicuous by its absence from the latter than the former.

IF THE HUMANIST INTELLECTUAL is to become the effective teacher and guide to society which he seeks to be, he cannot argue, I think, for the special social authority of his expertise. He can only argue for the worth of a perspective and a sense of proportion which he himself does not always exhibit. And he will need a better knowledge of such matters as science, industrialisation, law, economics, urban planning, than he usually now possesses. The universities will have to reassess the kind of education they offer their students, those with humanistic interests as well as others, and develop programmes of study that will enable future humanists to live and work effectively with other intellectuals in modern society.

For while humanists may do their job badly, they have a job to do. In the largest sense, the humanist intellectual has not been wrong. For the past two hundred years, we have lived with an economy and technology which have brought incredible boons to mankind, but at the price of a mindless ugliness, great suffering, and the callous destruction of priceless historical values. It is this, and not just odd, internal fantasies, which has put humanists, whether on the Right

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or the Left, in their characteristic posture of alienation. The posture is not one calculated to give them either a just perception of issues or a leverage on the facts; it needs the correctives of broader learning and more cosmopolitan sympathies. Nevertheless, our civilisation is not likely to make sense to itself until it makes better sense to those whose outlook has been formed by the humanistic tradition.

It is faced, of course, by a problem of meaning that transcends the purely social. The classic humanists, like Montaigne, Thomas More, Voltaire, stood for what they and their audiences took to be "enduring values." The question for our time is whether one can still assert and espouse such values without imputing to them the transcendental metaphysical or religious pedigrees they once enjoyed.

John Stuart Mill, Bertrand Russell, and John Dewey, to take only three examples, made an attempt to answer this question in the affirmative; that answer has been regarded by T. S. Eliot and others as the great heresy of our age. Whether it is or not, it is plain that the debate over meaning, over the nature and status of the purposes by which our civilisation should define itself, is the first and last item on the humanist agenda. It is impossible to think that this debate is not everybody's business. It may be that we have reached the end of ideology, but I suspect that the majority among us, intellectuals or otherwise, still seek to see our lives within a frame of experience and aspiration transcending the moment.

The Pursuer

In youth, I am on a green hill;
I am the snow-cap of the black valley.
Beat, beat speaks the brain—
I can't see you, yet I love you.

In the sun, I am vague as mountain mist;
I am speaking to the fusible air.
Beat, beat speaks the brain—
I can't hear that you love me.

In temper, I am the cold black night;
I am the voice of the lungless life.
Beat, beat speaks the brain—
I don't know that you love me.

In danger, I am the spineless mountain;
I am my pursuer and breaker.
Beat, beat speaks the brain—
I know you don't love me.

In love, I am refreshed at a white lake;
I am a cool soft snow fall.
Speak, speak says the heart—
I know you love me.

T. F. Griffin

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Richard Hough

Royal Disasters

Queen Victoria as Matchmaker: "Awful" Germany, "Dreadful" Russia

PRINCESS VICTORIA OF HESSE, Lord Mountbatten's mother and Prince Philip's grandmother, was born on 5 April 1863. She was Queen Victoria's first granddaughter to be born in England; the 43-year-old recently widowed Queen acted as additional accoucheuse during the confinement at Windsor Castle (a role she always liked to play), and the child grew up to be her favourite granddaughter.

Four more daughters and two sons followed Princess Victoria. Princess Elizabeth ("Ella"), 1864, Princess Irène, 1866, Prince Ernst Ludwig ("Ernie"), 1868, Prince Frederick ("Frittie"), 1870, Princess Alix ("Alicky"), 1872, and Princess Marie ("May"), 1874.

But the Hessian family was not to remain intact for long. The succession of tragedies that was to afflict this family, like the Coburgs, began when the younger boy mysteriously fell from a window of the New Palace at Darmstadt. His subsequent death was accelerated by the haemophilia from which he suffered. Two, and possibly all four, of Princess Victoria's sisters were "carriers" of this fearsome "royal disease." Five years later, in 1878, all but one of the family were struck down by a particularly virulent form of diphtheria. The mother, Queen Victoria's second daughter Alice, and the youngest of the family, May (little "Sunshine"), failed to recover.

The Queen was inconsolable when "good Brown" gave her the telegram with the awful news after breakfast on 14 December. From this time Princess Victoria, still only 15½ years old, was expected to act as foster-mother to her three surviving younger sisters, and her young brother Ernie. Her father, the Grand Duke of Hesse, was far too busy on state and military affairs to be able to give much attention to his children. The proper education and preparation for their royal responsibilities would rest with the governess, Miss Jackson, one or two relatives and members of the court, and with Victoria herself. She was to be guided from afar by Queen Victoria, and for some sixteen years the Queen kept up a steady flow of letters to her eldest Hessian granddaughter, which contained at first recommendations about her own character development and behaviour. There were also frequent injunctions about the grief for their dead mother which she was determined the children should keep alive in their young hearts—just as she kept glowing red the furnace of her own sorrow for the loss of good Albert for the rest of her life.

At the time of her mother's death Princess Victoria was a lively tomboy, inclined to boss about her young sisters and brother. She was the most intelligent and quickest-witted of these Hessian children, and the most stable and strong-willed. She was also the plainest, but that never

IN THE ARCHIVES *at Broadlands, Earl Mountbatten of Burma's home in Hampshire, there has lain for many years a large number of letters from Queen Victoria to Princess Victoria of Hesse, later Princess Louis of Battenberg and the Marchioness of Milford Haven. They bring interesting new light to bear on the Queen, especially on her role as a matchmaker in a dangerous pre-War Europe.*

These letters have never been published, but have now been made available to Richard Hough, along with much other material in the Broadlands Archives, for his biography of Lord Mountbatten's parents, "Louis and Victoria: the First Mountbattens" (to be published in September by Hutchinson).

Richard Hough has drawn freely on these letters, written between 1880 and 1894, for this account of a series of frustrating and disappointing episodes in the later years of Queen Victoria's reign. The central tragedies were those of political assassination —for the Queen, disliking Germany and fearing Russia, had sensed the smell of death and murder in post-Victorian Europe.

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much bothered her. "With my looks," she would say in later life, "I had to get by with my brains alone." She was admirably fitted for the difficult tasks, set by the Queen of England, that still lay ahead of her. But she was much too down-to-earth, too rational and practical, not to recover from her grief in spite of the Queen's constant reminders. When her grandmother told her that "with every year if not with every month you must miss your darling Mama more & more!", we can imagine this practical young girl respectfully accepting that the good Queen was wise in many things but did not always understand the human heart.

Two years passed, during which the Queen filled many pages with advice to Victoria which she trusted her granddaughter would pass on to her sisters. Among the subjects was "friendships."

> "I can therefore tell you *what she*[1] wd. have *wished*—You are right to be civil & friendly to the young girls you may occasionally meet & to see them sometimes—but *never* make *friendships*; girls friendships & intimacies are very bad & often lead to great mischief—
>
> "Grandpapa [Prince Albert] & I never allowed it, & dear Mama was quite of the same opinion. Besides, as you so truly say, you are so many of yourselves that you *want no one* else. I think also that you are *quite* right *not* to have large parties for you are both, & Ella, decidedly too young for them. And at the dinners remember *not* to talk too much & especially *not* too loud & not *across the table*. . . .
>
> "Write to me as often & as openly as you like about *everything* & it will be my *greatest pleasure* as well as my greatest *comfort* to be of use to you. It will be something like writing to darling Mama & it would give *her* such pleasure.
>
> "The state of Ireland causes me the greatest anxiety & worry. Uncle Leopd.[2] is able to walk about on crutches now—we expect him here next week.
>
> "Now goodbye & God bless you Darling Child. This day two years ago I first heard of darling Mama's illness & on Tuesday is that *terrible* anniversary.[3]
>
> "Love to Sisters & Ernie & thanks to him & Ella for their nice letters.
>
> *Ever your most devoted Grandmama* V.R.I"

In some of the Queen's strictures, but always in the most affectionate possible context, we can catch reflected glimpses of the nature of Princess Victoria as she approached womanhood.

> "Don't, young as you are, be too severe & critical of other people older than yourself. Quick & clever as you are you might be tempted, standing so much alone, without your darling Mother to guide & advise you, to be *sharp* in your remarks—& it wld. harm & not make people as fond of you as they otherwise wld."

Then a few weeks later, for her 18th birthday, the Queen advises her:

> "You will I am sure try to controul [*sic*] your temper & to become gentle & humble & not judge others too harshly. But I have never found you the least bit difficult to manage."

On 2 April 1882 the Queen writes from Mentone, where she liked to spend some of the worst winter months:

> "*Darling Victoria*,
>
> "*Many many* happy returns of your dear birthday; already your 19th—May each year find you wiser & better, feeling *more* the loss of beloved Mama & striving to follow in her footsteps. *Don't* try to check tender & loving feelings or to try & appear as if you were hard & ashamed of shedding tears. That is *not* feminine or womanly & the more you show your feelings the better it is; Try to be very loving & kind to others, very God-fearing & trusting in Him—& to be a help & example to your dear Geschwistern [sisters and brother] as you always have been. You have always listened to what I have told you & therefore will I am sure do so again now.
>
> "Dear Papa will give you my presents, one is a product of the work here—
>
> "We have continued to have most splendid weather. Uncle Leopd. is much better. He is on his sofa since Friday but I fear it will be *slow*.—We shall leave next week (in Easter week—Tuesday Wednesday or Thursday after Easter).
>
> "With many loves to Ella
>
> *Ever your devoted Grandmama* V.R.I"

INCREASINGLY, WITH THIS WORTHY ADVICE ON character and conduct, the Queen showed her concern about the marriages of these motherless Hessian granddaughters. Queen Victoria always stoutly denied that she was a matchmaker even while she, as royal puppeteer, was pulling the complex dynastic strings across Europe. Considering her position as the greatest of all royal matriarchs, it is surprising how often those strings became knotted and crossed. She was especially unsuccessful with her Hessian grandchildren. Only one married as she had plotted and wished, and that—as we shall see—was a disaster.

Her first marital guidance was aimed at Victoria before she was 18, and includes one of her frequent cracks at German royal practice:

> "There is another *most important* thing wh you are *quite old* enough for me to speak or write to you about. Dear Papa will, I know, be teazed & pressed to make you marry, & I have told him you were far too young to think of it, & that your 1st duty was to stay with *him*, & to be as it were the Mistress of the House, as so many eldest daughters are to their Fathers, when God has taken their beloved

[1] Queen Victoria's emphases are indicated in the printed text by the use of italic type for one underlining, bold for two, and bold with a rule for three.

[2] Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and the Queen's last son, suffered from haemophilia.

[3] The death of the Prince Consort in 1861, and also, by agonising coincidence, of Princess Alice.

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Mother away—I know full well that *you* have *no* ideas of this sort & that *you* (unlike, I am sorry to say, so many *Princesses abroad*)—don't wish *to be married* for *marrying's sake* & to have a *position*.

"I know darling child that you would *never* do this, & dear Mama had a horror of it; but it is a very *German* view of things & I wd wish you to be *prepared* & on your *guard* when such things are brought before Papa."

Having seen her own first two girls ("Vicky" and Alice) go to Germany, the Queen was determined to draw back to England some at least of their children, and above all to prevent them from "going to Russia", a fate she regarded as worse than death.

For nearly three years Victoria fulfilled her duties at Darmstadt as the Queen had intended. But by the early summer of 1883, when she was just 20, she had lost her heart to a handsome and (fortunately) princely British naval officer.

PRINCE LOUIS OF BATTENBURG was Victoria's first cousin once removed, the son of a morganatic Hessian marriage—Prince Alexander of Hesse and the lady-in-waiting to his sister who had married the Tsarevitch. Prince Louis as a boy had developed a longing to join the British Navy, although he had scarcely ever seen the sea; and he became a naturalised British citizen at the age of 14. He was, in 1883, a Lieutenant RN, an intimate friend of the Prince of Wales, and with many searing romances behind him, the most recent and most intense with Lily Langtry.

The Queen (who knew nothing of these goings-on) was fond of this splendid bearded sailor, and was taken—delightfully—by surprise when she heard of his courtship of her granddaughter. The first news came from Victoria's father, and was confirmed by Victoria's younger sister Ella.

"I cannot be silent," the Queen told Victoria (19 June 1883), and then:

"You will I know be anxious to know what *I* think? I think that you have done well to choose only a Husband who is *quite* of your way of thinking & who in many respects is as English as you are—whose interests must be the same as yours & who dear Mama liked.

"Besides you do *not* leave dear Papa who needs your help as much as the dear Geschwister do. One only drawback I see—& that is 'the fortune'. *I* don't think *riches* make happiness, or that they are necessary, but I *do* think a certain amount is a necessity so as to be independent. And that I *hope* you will be able to reassure me upon—& have well thought of before you take the irrevocable step."

Victoria was quite unable to reassure her grandmother about "the fortune", and the Battenbergs, especially early in their marriage, were penurious by the standards of royalty.

EVEN BEFORE SHE HERSELF was married, Victoria was being hard-pressed by the Queen about her sister Ella's future. Princess Elizabeth was a great catch for any prince. At eighteen her delicate features, beautiful skin, and fine figure had set many hearts aflame about the palaces of Europe. On 1 January 1883 the Queen first hinted at Prince Frederick of Baden as a husband for Ella. At the same time she was laying long-term plans for English husbands for the two younger girls:

Jan 1. 1883

"*Darling Victoria,*

"Many affte thanks for your dear letter of the 27th & let me wish you all possible happiness in this New Year. It is always a very serious thing to bid goodbye to the old one with all its anxieties, trials, sorrows & joys, & to look forward to *what* is unknown & to what *may* happen before this day comes round again. But we must trust & rely on God's merciful protection & help—& the more we do that the more easily shall we be prepared to meet all the trials of this very uncertain world. Always think of that, dear Child—& you will find Life far more real & far easier.

"I am glad you are going to Berlin. Do tell me what you think abt Ella & Fritz of Baden? He is excellent & I hear from all sides once did his work admirably & with great selbstständigkeit [independence]. Ella shd not marry for a year or 2—but it wd. be a vy. nice & comfortable position for her. Russia, I cd. not wish for any of you & dear Mama always said she wd never hear of it. When shall we meet again? The Season is not a good time for you —& especially not for Ella—Do you think Irène & Alicky cd come together to Scotland or better not together? I consult you as I know dear Papa talks to you about all these things. How I shd like to see Papa trying to blow the Pipes. [The Queen had given him some bagpipes for Christmas.] He must bring them with him when he comes over & get Ross or Campbell to give him a lesson.

"It is wrong that the people at Darmstadt dislike his coming here. Really he is never here more than 3 weeks or a month at a time & this last year was a great exception. Let me know what dresses you are going to wear at the Fancy [Dress] Ball. I hope you go on with your modelling? Is Louis Battenberg quite well again? How are the dogs?

"Now with many loves & good wishes to the others—

Ever your devoted Grandmama V.R.I"

But the Queen was already too late. Princess Elizabeth of Hesse's heart was lost to a Russian Grand Duke, Tsar Alexander III's younger brother Sergius ("Serge"). There was a dark, mystical and romantic side to Ella's character which was irresistibly attracted to the thin, pale Serge with his fanatical eyes. He was seven years older, had teased her affectionately when she was a little girl, and now sometimes made her blush when he reminded her that he had once seen her younger sister Alicky being bathed.

In anguish, Queen Victoria wrote from Buckingham Palace two months later:

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"Oh! dear! How very unfortunate it is of Ella to refuse good Fritz of Baden so good & steady, with such a safe, happy position & for a **Russian.** I do deeply regret it. Ella's health will never stand the climate wh . . . has ruined the health of almost all the German Psses who went there; besides the dreadful state Russia is in, & the very depressed bad state of Society. You told me, only quite lately, darling Child, that you thought Ella cared for no one? What does this all mean? It will give poor Papa much trouble & annoyance but I am doing all I can to make it smooth with the Empress [of Germany] who is badly annoyed. What *does* Miss Jackson say?

"Many thanks for your dear amusing letter of the 2nd—Do try & make some sketches of your costumes.

"We have dreadfully cold weather—We are just returning to Windsor. Uncle Leopold's Baby[4] is a beautiful Child.

Ever your devoted Mama [sic] V.R.I"

The Queen suffered another blow a few weeks later—not this time a marital disappointment but "the loss of the *dearest, most devoted* & invaluable friend I ever had who was so kind, so cheery & so full of fun, & such a help such a comfort—& *we* were so devoted to *each other*"—in short, her Scots gillie, Brown, had died.

But the Queen was a tenacious fighter. In her next letter to Victoria, she writes:

"I am rather sorry to hear from Papa that he speaks as if Ella's marriage was to be. Ella herself says 'There is no hurry' & that she *don't* wish to go to Russia & that *if* it was [word omitted] must be made for her living out of Russia I think *you* shld. get Papa to make this an *absolute condition, & not* to hurry it on. Ella ought to be *20* before she marries."

In the late summer of 1883 the Queen believed she had turned the tide—and a new candidate made his entry, this time from Scandinavia:

"I shall certainly not say a word to Ella abt Pce Charles of Sweden—but I must say I rejoice that she has acted as she has done abt Serge, for I own I *dreaded* this marriage very much for *her.* Papa was quite right in saying I did not set her *agst* Serge but I did tell her to reflect well before she accepted him & to remember the climate & the state of the Country & that (contrary to what she wished & wh I had *thought* possible) her *living* out of Russia cld only be the *exception* to the rule. . . I never gave Ella credit for so much independence of character."

Two letters from the Queen, on 4 and 8 September, hint at a last-ditch stand. "If only Ella remains firm? I can't tell you how I dread that marriage for her. . . . I trust you will never let Ella marry a Gd Duke. *In fact,* it will *be her ruin.*"

[4] Alice, later Countess of Athlone, now 91, the last of Queen Victoria's grandchildren, and living in good health at Kensington Palace.

THERE WAS, AS ALWAYS, very little poor Victoria could do, and by late October the Queen knew she had lost, and she resorted to pleas for conditions—that Ella should not marry until she was 20, that she would live some of the year out of Russia, that she would come and stay with her in England before the marriage—"without the *Intended* . . . as I have a *particular* aversion to being mixed up with *Brautstand* [engaged couples —the Queen *loathed* public courtship]—& I hope I may be spared *that.*"

At the same time the Queen sensibly adjusted to, and made the best of, this sorry outcome. As ready with advice to her grandchildren as she had been with her own children, she wrote to Victoria on 28 November 1883:

"What I say to Ella abt. marriage *in general,* I wld wish also to say to *you*; for it is very necessary to look on it in a *serious light.* So many girls think to marry is *merely* to be independent & amuse oneself—whereas it is the very *reverse* of independence—*2* wills have to be *made* to act together & it is *only* by *mutual* agreement & *mutual yielding* to one another that a happy marriage can be arrived at."

BOTH VICTORIA AND ELLA were married in 1884. The two weddings, in Darmstadt and St Petersburg, were magnificent occasions. Victoria's was the more eventful. The Queen herself attended, and was scandalised to hear that her widowed son-in-law, Victoria's father and the Grand Duke of Hesse, had secretly married a *divorced commoner,* a Mme de Kolemine with whom he had been living, immediately after the royal ceremony. Before leaving Germany for England she saw to it that this unhappy and shaming business was cleared up, and by July 1884 the marriage had been annulled. There was, however, nothing more she could do about Ella's wedding in June, except to refuse to attend and hope that things would not be as awful in "that terrible Russia" as she had feared.

The wedding, the Queen later observed to Victoria, "seems to have gone off uncommonly well & been most splendid—but I hope that Darling Ella won't be spoilt by all this admiration & adulation & all this glittering jewelry & grandeur etc." On top of all their other sins the Russians, in the Queen's eyes, were vulgarly ostentatious with their riches.

Serge and Ella settled down to a life of luxury in their Russian palaces which made Windsor or Balmoral seem austere. The Queen remained jaundiced about the marriage, which proved to

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be childless. Three years after the wedding she was telling Victoria that "dear Mama wld never have allowed it to come about. Ella's constant speaking of her happiness I don't quite like", she continued sagely. "*When* people are very happy they don't require to *tell* others of it."

By 1887 two of Queen Victoria's Hessian granddaughters, and her Hessian grandson, remained still unmarried. She was determined to have the two girls for her English grandsons, even though (as she could sometimes write in despair) "*my* wishes & hopes seem *never* to be fulfilled so it is useless for me to look forward any more. . . ."

EARLY IN THAT YEAR she heard a rumour that the third daughter Irène had fallen for her cousin, Queen Victoria's Prussian sailor grandson, Prince Henry, the future Kaiser Wilhelm II's younger brother. This was, again, quite contrary to her wishes. Princess Irène promised that she would not formalise their understanding until her sailor love returned from a long cruise. Then, on 2 February, the Queen read in the newspapers of their engagement—"to *learn* it from the papers *1st* is too much," she exclaimed.

At once she wrote a long and angry letter to Victoria, just as if this elder sister could have done anything about the romance.

> "I felt quite ill—for I am so deeply hurt at Irène's conduct *towards me* wh is neither kind grateful or straightforward. I spoke to her on the subject not long before she left, & said I *don't* say it is never to be, *only don't bind* yourself before he goes away on a long voyage—but say you cannot *as yet* give a promise. And she *assured* me *again & again* that she wld *never do that*! *How* **can** I trust her again after such conduct?
>
> "Loving her as I do treating her & you all as my own Children & having to a gt. extent acted a Mother's part to you all & been so vy intimate with her, this *want* of *openness* has *hurt* me *deeply* . . .
>
> "You say you feel sure I will rejoice at *her happiness*. But that is *just what* I do *not* feel sure of. Henry is not at all strong, the Empress [of Germany] hates *all* connected with your family **now**. Dear Mama did *not* wish such a marriage for any of you, as little as a *Russian* one, *& her wishes* have been totally disregarded. To go into extacies [*sic*] abt "verlobungen" [engagements] I *never* can. I have seen *so many* unhappy marriages, such crushed & blasted hopes—that I never *can* look but with gt anxiety upon marriage. Life becomes so full of trials & difficulties in the *happiest* marriage.
>
> "I had other *hopes & wishes* for Irène."

Looking back to the last Hessian marriage, the Queen added bitterly:

> "It reminds me of Ella's & Serge's marriage (wh I grieve over *as much as ever*) & that *you* were made to announce it to me as (I suspect) *no one* else liked to do it, just after she had *declared* she wld *not* accept him!! It is too bad to act in this way."

Princess Irène married her German Prince on 24 May 1888. Queen Victoria refused to go to the wedding, only expressing her sorrow that it should be taking place in Potsdam, the heart of Prussian perfidy; but diplomatically making the excuse that "I certainly shd not [come] *any how*" as it was "*quite* impossible for me to go abroad again".

PRINCESS VICTORIA had now been married for four years and had a three-year-old daughter, Alice (Prince Philip's mother), when the subject of Princess Alix's future was first raised in her correspondence with Queen Victoria. "I dare hardly hope for better things for lovely Alicky," the Queen wrote in despair after the loss to the Prussians of "darling Irène."

Alicky, everyone agreed, was indeed the loveliest of all the Hessian girls, and precious beyond words to Queen Victoria as the last unmarried daughter of her dead daughter. From the girl's earliest years, the Queen saw her as a future Queen of England. Already in 1888, the Queen's eldest son Bertie (the Prince of Wales) was corpulent and middle-aged. Dynastic plans for his eldest son Eddie (Prince Albert Victor) had to be made to secure a suitable bride for the future Heir Presumptive. Ever realistic, Queen Victoria recognised that her grandson was not possessed of either exceptional looks or brains. His wife would, therefore, need to be exceptional.

In the early autumn of 1888, Alicky was 16, Eddie 24. The Queen invited her, with her father, to Balmoral when Eddie would be there. She hoped that an arrangement between the two young people might be engineered. But, before travelling to Balmoral, Alicky went to Russia to visit her elder sister Ella and to stay at Peterhof. It was not her first time there, and she remembered tenderly her earlier childhood friendship with the kindly, handsome, young Tsarevitch Nicholas. It was an idyllic, fairy-tale visit, and Alicky fell deeply in love.

There was no formal understanding but when Alicky left, her heart—like Ella's before her—was quite lost to the romance of Russia as well as to her Nicky. Alicky said nothing of this to the Queen at Balmoral, but when Eddie proposed, she turned him down gently. The Queen was appalled when the truth emerged. In March 1889 she wrote to Victoria:

> "Is there *no* hope abt E.? She is *not 19*—& she shld be made to reflect seriously on the folly of throwing away the chance of a very good Husband, kind, affectionate & steady & of entering a united

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happy family & a very good position wh is second to *none* in *the world*! . . . poor E is so unhappy at the thought of losing her also! Can you & Ernie not do any good? What fancy has she got in her head?"

Little did the widowed Queen know that the Russia she hated so bitterly had got into Alicky's pretty young head. So, once again, she fought on for the Hessian Princess who knew she had the choice of becoming the future Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India, or future Empress of all the Russias.

VICTORIA REMAINED in the firing line. On 30 October 1889 the Queen wrote to her:

"We have just a *faint lingering* hope that Alicky *might in time* look to see what a pleasant home, & what a *useful* position she will lose if she ultimately *persists* in not yielding to Eddy's *really earnest* wishes. He wrote to me he shld *not* give up the idea (tho' it is considered for the *present at an end*)—and: 'I don't think she knows how I love her, or she cld not be so cruel'."

A year later the Queen began to feel that her worst fears might be realised—that she was not only going to lose Alicky but "that dreadful Russia" might be claiming her, too. In the summer of 1890 Alicky and Ernie, her younger brother, again visited Russia with their father, to Queen Victoria's chagrin. She charged her eldest son, the Prince of Wales, with the task of helping Victoria to prevent any marriage there, though royal rumour had it that there already existed an unofficial understanding with the Tsarevitch.

"I hope I was *right* [the Queen wrote to Victoria (15 July 1890)] in telling Uncle Bertie [Prince of Wales] that I *knew* there was *no question* of a *marriage* for *her in Russia*, & that you have brought her back safe & *free*? Uncle Bertie says he knows Ella will move heaven & Earth to get her to marry a Gd duke!"

And how right Uncle Bertie was—and how soon it was that the Queen had to recognise the sad reality!

Dec 29 1890

"*Darling Victoria*,

"In my last letter I said I must write to you about a *subject* wh. I had no time for, then. It is abt Alicky & N. I had *your assurance* that *nothing* was to be *feared* in that quarter, but I *know* it *for certain*, that in spite of *all your* (Papa's Ernie's & your) *objections* & still more *contrary* to the *positive* wish of *his Parents* who do not *wish* him to *marry A.* as they feel, as everyone must do, for the *youngest* Sister to *marry* the *son of the Er.* [Emperor] —wld never answer, & lead to no happiness,—well in spite of all this behind *all* your backs, Ella & S. do *all* they *can* to bring it *about*, encouraging & even urging the Boy to do it!— . . . Papa *must* put his foot down & there *must* be no more visits of Alicky to Russia—& *he must* & *you* & Ernie must insist on a *stop* being put to the whole affair.

"The state of Russia is *so bad*, so rotten that at any moment something dreadful might happen. . . .

"I have written all to Papa, who *must* be *strong* & firm & I am so afraid he may *not* be.

"It wld have the very worst effect here & in Germany (where Russia is not liked) & wld. produce a gt separation between our families. Already Ernie & Alicky have not been here this year.

"We continue to have bitterly cold weather. . . .

"And now with renewed good wishes for the New Year in wh we hope to meet ere long.

Ever your devoted Grandmama V.R.I"

FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS Princess Alix's future remained uncertain. One month the Queen expresses her sympathy with her granddaughter over her sadness that the Russian romance is at an end; another month, it seems that all is lost and the Queen resorts to despair again.

By May 1894 she knew that once again she had been vanquished.

"Oh! darling Victoria, the more I think of sweet Alicky's marriage the more unhappy I am! *Not* as to the personality, for I like him *very much* but on acct of the Country the policy & differences with us & the awful insecurity to wh that sweet Child will be exposed. To think she is learning Russian & will have probably to talk to a Priest—my whole nature rises up agst it—in spite of my efforts to be satisfied.—

"But I will *try* & bear it & make the best of it. Still the feeling that I had laboured so hard to *prevent it* & that I felt at last there was *no longer* any danger & all in one night—*everything* was changed. Ella shld never have encouraged it originally as she did—at one time."

Alicky and Nicky both came on a last visit to England before their marriage, and the Queen bore stoically their *Brautstand*. With the Princess there arrived at Windsor a Russian priest—the unkindest cut of all—to teach Alicky her new religion. They were married, and were Emperor and Empress of all the Russias (due to the sudden death of Tsar Alexander III) by the end of the year.

So now "my *sweet* innocent *gentle* Alicky" was gone, too. And the Queen sought consolation in her great-grandchildren—forever hoping for a better dynastic future for them. Meanwhile, under severe pressure from the Queen, Ernie had married. His wife was the lively, careless, tomboyish Victoria Melita, Princess of Edinburgh ("Ducky"), who loved nothing better than to gallop one of her more vigorous horses through the Hessian forests. She neglected her royal duties, and had several miscarriages after giving birth to a daughter, Elizabeth.

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OF ALL THESE HESSIAN MARRIAGES, only Victoria's (in which the Queen had no hand) ended in anything but disaster. Ernie's finished in the scandal of divorce in 1901, and his daughter Elizabeth died of typhoid two years later. Ella's Grand Duke Serge was assassinated by an anarchist in 1905, and Ella herself was thrown alive down a mineshaft in the course of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1918. (She lived for some days, tending her fellow-victims, in spite of grenades being thrown down into the shaft after them.)

Princess Irène gave birth to a haemophilic boy who died at four years, and her marriage to a Prussian Admiral made relations difficult with many of her family after 1914.

The fate of Alicky, her Nicky, and her four beautiful daughters and haemophilic son, is too well known to be retold again here. Russia had proved as "*dreadful*" as the prescient Queen had predicted, and Victoria remembered for the rest of her life the appeals by her grandmother to stop the marriages of her younger sisters.

Only Victoria's own marriage was a fulfilled success under the Queen's exacting standards. She had first three fine children, Princess Alice being followed by Princess Louise (later Queen of Sweden) and Prince George, second Marquis of Milford Haven. Then, eight years later in 1900, Prince Louis was born to her at Windsor. The old Queen stood for the last time as Godmother—and had her spectacles knocked off her nose by the lusty child at the christening. Both sons entered the Royal Navy as a matter of course—and the younger became, partly by reason of his achievements as Supreme Commander in the Far East, and then as the last Viceroy of India, the most famous British naval officer since Nelson.

BUT VICTORIA HAD her own tragedies in the Hessian tradition. She saw her husband hounded out of office as professional head of the Royal Navy in 1914, deprived of his name and title in 1917, and die in 1921. Her elder son died of cancer in 1938, and besides the frightful ends of her sisters Ella and Alicky in "awful" Russia, she saw many of her relations die violently, including almost the entire Hessian family in an air crash at Ostend in 1937. When War came again in 1939 she at once conditioned herself to the fact that Lord Louis, now her only son, would be killed too.

This she was spared, and by 1950 when this remarkable old lady died, she had seen her grandson Philip (whom she and her sons had helped to bring up) married to the Heir Presumptive to the British throne, and a son, Prince Charles, born to the couple.

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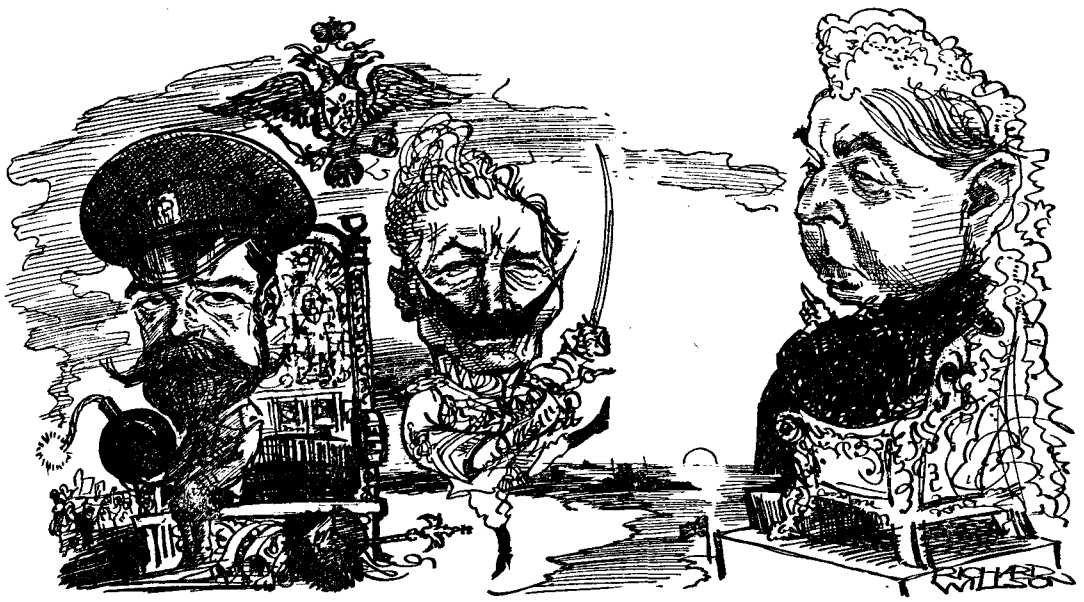

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Frantz Fanon

"Black Orpheus" of the Homeless Left—By FRANÇOIS BONDY

FRANTZ FANON died in 1961 at the age of 36, at which time Algeria (his adopted country) honoured him with a state funeral and with a boulevard and a university in his name. Fanon was a doctor and psychiatrist from Martinique; his wife Josie was a white French woman, and she still lives in Algeria with her two children. Most of his brothers and sisters live in Martinique, but one brother has a high position in the Ministry of Finance in Paris, and although a native of Martinique, which is a French *Département*, he is not allowed to go there because of his so-called unacceptable opinions on self-government. In Fort de France, Fanon was taught by the poet and political writer Aimé Césaire, the prophet of "*négritude*," and in France one of his teachers was Francis Jeanson, a disciple of Jean-Paul Sartre's, who became as actively involved in support of the Algerian struggle in the 1950s as Frantz Fanon himself.

Frantz Fanon came of a middle-class family of mixed black, white, and Indian blood, and his Christian name recalls the Alsatian origin of one branch of the family. Frantz was blacker than his brothers and sisters. Through his education he felt himself a Frenchman whose race and origin were incidental. He joined the Free French Army, took part in the liberation of the French "Motherland", was wounded and awarded a medal. The discovery that a black man was not treated as the equal of a Frenchman in the army, even though as a "*Martiniquais*" he was treated differently again from the Africans, led to his first book which he wrote at the age of 27: *Black Skins, White Masks*. Although thickly larded with references and quotations, chiefly from Nietzsche and Jaspers, and with a rather superficial newly-acquired psychological jargon, it is an extraordinary account of his mental growth. It remains Fanon's one contribution, but an important one, to the understanding of the society in the Antilles island, and his alienated feelings, as an intellectual "*Martiniquais*," of being both an outsider and at home in the French community.

> "Some ten years ago I was astonished to learn that the North Africans despised men of colour. It was absolutely impossible for me to make any contact with the local population. I left Africa and went back to France without having fathomed the reason for this hostility. Meanwhile, certain facts had made me think. The Frenchman does not like the Jew, who does not like the Arab, who does not like the Negro. . . ."

Francis Jeanson wrote an introduction to this book; and Jean-Paul Sartre, Fanon's philosophical mentor but his political pupil, wrote a foreword to *The Wretched of the Earth*. This and his preface to Leopold Senghor's poetry anthology, *Black Orpheus*, contain Sartre's most important ideas about revolutions outside Europe. (His study of Lumumba, an uncritical and basically paternalist projection of French historical and sociological categories on to the Congo, is of lesser interest.)

Is there anything we can learn today from Fanon's message, his example, or his ideas?[1]

[1] Most of Fanon's works have been widely translated and put into paper-back circulation. In the original French they have run to many editions and printings, and there are also now a number of interesting and important studies, including Albert Memmi's essay in *Esprit* (September 1971), and two American biographies: Peter Geismar's *Fanon* (1971) and—the one indispensable book—Irene L. Gendzier, *Frantz Fanon: a critical study* (1973). Simone de Beauvoir's recorded memories of Fanon—in the second volume of her memoirs, *The Prime of Life* (1962)—are perceptive and revealing and they give the impression that Fanon had a frantic craving for argument and action, at a time when he was already doomed to die of leukemia.

For my own part, I have attempted to situate Fanon in the line of Jean-Jacques Rousseau rather than of Karl Marx or Lenin, in my book *Der Rest ist Schreiben* (Vienna, 1972). I should also mention David Caute's rather simplistic study *Fanon* (Fontana Modern Masters, 1970), and a ponderous book on Fanon published in Germany: Renate Zahar's *Kolonialismus und Entfremdung, zur politischen Theorie Frantz Fanons* (Frankfurt, 1969). It has been translated into French, and it is, inevitably, overloaded with not always relevant quotations from Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse.

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FANON'S STYLE and reasoning powers, apart from certain apodictic obscurities, are essentially those of a Parisian *homme de lettres*, even though he was doubly alienated from France as a *"Martiniquais"* and as an adoptive Algerian. The letter he wrote in 1956 to Robert Lacoste, the French governor of Algeria, announcing his resignation from his post as doctor in the Blida psychiatric clinic, is the manifesto of a Frenchman who deplores what is happening in Algeria and wants no part of it. A committed French intellectual therewith made a political and moral decision. From that point on Fanon spoke of the Algerians as "we"—as a leader writer on the FLN paper *El Moudjahid* in Tunis, and then as ambassador of the Algerian provisional government in Accra. Albert Memmi reports that when Fanon wrote of *"nos pères"* he somehow meant Algerian ancestors; and Memmi remarks how unusual it is for anyone with a French upbringing to make such a tribal transition, like those Senegalese and Antillese schoolchildren who spoke of "our ancestors the Gauls"! As a black man with a French education, who barely knew Arabic and was not a Moslem, Fanon had taken an extraordinary leap forward, or backward, to think (and perhaps to feel) of the Algerians in a personal ancestral line.

In Fanon's short-lived career his character proved to be astonishingly strong and independent. His writings, including a number of psychiatric publications, show a certain open-mindedness and critical acumen, only occasionally subordinate to the requirements of propaganda. Of course Fanon, like Che Guevara and Régis Debray, was a theorist and militant in the cause of "tri-continental revolution"; but his intellectual experience was richer than theirs, and he was also closer to reality and more down-to-earth. After the War he was well on the way to a successful career as a psychiatrist. He worked with Tosquelles, a leading modern psychiatrist and director of a clinic in Normandy, and his overseas transfer to Blida was by chance. (When Algeria became independent, this clinic was named after Fanon.)

Fanon sought to express his sympathy with the Algerian struggle for independence in deeds more than in words. As a psychiatrist he encountered the effects of this awful 7-year war, with all its brutality and torture. He protected *feddayin*, helped to hide them, and became an Algerian political activist. His first book had been about his rootlessness in his own native land. Taking root in Algeria was not only an overt political decision for him but also a deep psychological need.

THE IDEA OF *"négritude,"* extolled by Aimé Césaire in his poems, only caught Fanon's enthusiasm for a brief time. Perhaps it was not so much a colour or a country that he was adopting as a revolution. In Colonel Boumedienne's post-revolutionary Algeria, it was inconceivable that he would have sat on a political council or served as an ambassador or even as a propagandist.

Already under Ben Bella (who shared Fanon's romantic belief in the peasants as the only true revolutionaries), and all the more after Ben Bella's fall, the various factions of international revolutionaries—Greeks, Egyptians, French—who took part in the Algerian struggle were expelled, one after the other. Fanon saw himself in Accra as the prophet of a future united Africa, and he would have preferred his true roots to be set in this Pan-African revolution. This, too, has not come to pass—just as Fanon s expectation that Algerian women would be emancipated after independence has not been fulfilled. But his defenders would argue that no true or deep general revolution can happen "at a stroke."

Fanon never became particularly popular with the black Africans. Even black American writers like Richard Wright and James Baldwin felt "foreign" among Africans, and probably Fanon did too. It is part of his strange story that his greatest effect as a prophet of violence was in the far-away USA. There he became the posthumous hero of the Black Panthers and indeed on the scene of the whole New Left as it emerged in the 1960s. In fact, one armed Black Panther intellectual wrote: "Our brothers who shoot from the rooftops have all read Fanon."[2]

This long-distance effect of the clever and sensitive psychiatrist from Martinique was all the more curious and remarkable when one recalls that Fanon fought as a Frenchman for France, as an Algerian for Algeria, and did not preach out-and-out racial struggle between black and white, but rather cooperation and reconciliation between races (after the "overthrow of capitalism," of course).

Fanon's advocacy of violence has often been compared with Georges Sorel's essay on violence. Yet in his preface to Fanon's last book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Sartre angrily dismissed Sorel's book as "fascist rubbish." Fanon probably never read Sorel, and made his way to the notion of violent purification from his own experience of the long-standing contempt of the *colons* towards the Algerians who finally broke out in violent rage against their humiliation. Then he developed it into a faith and a theory. Fanon's standpoint is rather more political than Sartre's in his preface.

[2] About this "Americanisation" of Fanon, the political scientist Aristide Zolberg has written incisively in ENCOUNTER (November 1966).

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The Paris philosopher actually called for the physical annihilation of Europeans and spoke of Europe as a continent which had endlessly betrayed and cheated the rest of the world. Sartre sharply criticised the Algerian leaders for finally coming to terms with General de Gaulle on their country's independence—instead of carrying the revolution over to France. He expected them to set loose a permanent revolutionary internationalism, for in his own ideology the colonial nations were to replace the feeble European proletariat as the revolutionary class.

Fanon appeared to be more "pragmatic." From Europe Fanon wanted only reparation, and reparations required an intact European economy rather than a European chaos.

YET THE ECONOMIC ASPECT was not central, and Fanon was not concerned with rapid material progress in the former colonies. He was more interested in a "new way of life." He wanted an end to "bureaucracy", to "native bourgeoisies", to the "aping of the economic modes of former masters." The old order was much better at such things. What he longed for was the restoration of a damaged collective dignity —the same idea was also central for Georges Sorel —on the basis of an austere equality. An ascetic way of life would befit men to be leaders. Nobody was to live any better than the humble peasants in the villages. There was to be no whoring after the false gods of "modernisation" and "industrialisation." No wonder the communists were astounded at his theories and alarmed at his influence! To be sure, the idea that virtue lay in refusing progress went back to Rousseau; but Rousseau taught—for example, in his famous bit of advice to the Poles—that an independent country's sovereign character must lean heavily on its tradition, which should even be over-emphasised and stylised. Yet Fanon refused to hark back to the past. As he wrote in *Black Skin, White Masks:*

> "In no way should I dedicate myself to the revival of an unjustly unrecognized Negro civilisation. I will not make myself the man of any past. I do not want to exalt the past at the expense of my present and my future."
> "The body of history does not determine a single one of my actions. I am my own foundation."

Fanon wanted his place, and all Africa's place, to be set in a long and permanent revolution, in the future and nowhere else. If he spoke against one-party states as a new despotism it was not as if he were supporting a democratic "pluralism" but rather better one-party states, which were to be closer to the people and to be based on a separation of power between State and Party. He warned against overgrown capital cities. All these were useful warnings for former African colonies—but they were completely ignored.

FANON LONGED TO BE on the locomotive of history, but he got the railway time-table all wrong. Most of the decolonisation of black Africa took place without bloodshed, and this too was against Fanon's teaching of the benign psychological advantage (and indeed necessity) of violence in the "final contest." African independence did not lead to African unity but rather to further Balkanisation, except in the powerful military states of Nigeria and Zaire. A victorious political élite assumed the enormous privileges of a New Class. As the agronomist René Dumont, who like Fanon always stressed the problem of Africa's rural economy, has written:

> "In former French Africa we now see fifteen governments with more than 150 ministers, hundreds of cabinet members, thousands of members of parliament. Gabon, which has 450,000 inhabitants, has 65 members of parliament, one for each 6,000 people as compared with one for 100,000 in France —and their privileges are comparable to those of French deputies." (*L'Afrique Noire est mal partie*, Paris, 1962)

Did anything turn out as Fanon wanted it to

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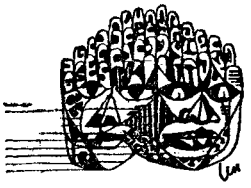
in Africa? Very little, and very much went quite the opposite way. There is no sign of a "Pan-African solidarity of hardship and hunger" in the arid regions of West Africa—there is not even much interest in the need for it. No social group in Black Africa has shown itself to be attracted by Fanon's appeal. Where are the African intellectuals who go out to the villages to teach and help and lead the people, like the *Narodniki* in Russia or the Gandhians in India? This is simply not happening in Black Africa.

Fanon was a prophet without honour in his own country but also without honour throughout the African continent. Even the "Fanonism" in the American Black Power movement has disappeared together with its charismatic manifestations. Where is Stokely Carmichael? Who knows of Eldridge Cleaver? Some of these old militants still live in Algeria, Fanon's adopted country. But in the USA Black Panthers now preach "Ballots, not Bullets," and seek power in city council elections and jobs in the community social services. It has been a striking change of direction—and would probably have been, in Fanon's view, a bleak regression of the Black Revolution: it has been a phenomenon almost ignored outside the USA. Certain minds thrive only on the spectacle of enthusiasm and hope, and turn away from the realities of disenchantment and reconsideration. Nobody less than the Algerian Vice-President, Belkacem Krim, pronounced these words in a funeral oration: "Frantz Fanon! Your example will always remain alive. Rest in peace! Algeria will never forget you. . . ." A few years later Krim was sentenced to death on charges of treason and conspiracy, and was subsequently found murdered.[3]

Much of the vaunted "new politics" and the cult of "revolutionary violence" has disappeared. Of the Third World charismatic leaders only Fidel Castro and Sekou Touré remain. But this used to be the grandiloquent world of Nehru, Nasser, Nkrumah, Sukarno; all were regarded, only yesterday, as secular prophets and history-makers of the first importance.



Is Fanon still worth reading? I should think there is good reason for interest in him still being so strong. For his experiences and decisions still touch us—but then we could say that after the death of any youthful revolutionary ideologist. Surely this is not enough. Fanon's dream of a united Third World is over. But today Europe is indeed "besieged," as Fanon hoped and foresaw it would be. It is not besieged however by men of revolution but by men of power. The most conservative states in the Third World have become global movers and shakers—it is the time not of Fanon but Feisal. Oil is the catchword, not Utopia. Saudi Arabia has seized the leadership, not the HQ of Afro-Asia revolutionaries. As for Libya, it really represents politically a kind of Islamic puritan restoration. It is not essentially revolutionary and does not believe in "the future" (in Fanon's sense, or in the sense of the progressivism of European radical intellectuals); and Ghadafi is proving to be simply an embarrassment. (After all, he wants to turn the clock back on women's emancipation which for Fanon was a central issue.)

Frantz Fanon, the Algerian revolutionary and the Pan-African, was in truth a typical French intellectual and remains part of the European romance of ideas. It was not a world he made, but he was made by it: made, at least partly, by European experience—European crises and contradictions, faults and misdemeanours—and also by Europe's moral imperatives and world-wide perspectives. Fanon was the "Black Orpheus" of the Parisian revolutionary intelligentsia. He was more a creature of the European system than he would ever know or admit, although he wanted to free a whole continent from it. Outside this system, and apart from the societies and cultures where it obtains, he is quite incomprehensible.

We are often reminded what happened to the foreigners who took part in the great French Revolution and the great Russian Revolution—exiled, executed, ignored, sometimes (happily) pensioned off. Every revolution begins by celebrating the freedom of all mankind, but it later comes to take a more narrow view of its tasks, and the first victims are the universalists, the comrades with all-too-cosmopolitan ideas. But this cosmopolitanism (described so memorably by André Malraux in his novel *The Conquerors*), this active sharing in the fate of other nations and people, is part of the European tradition. Militants who follow the cause are successors to the missionaries who followed the cross and sometimes preceded the flag, and they all bring a gospel of salvation. They may think of their activity as selfless service on behalf of another people; but "service," however selfless, comes to mean influence and ultimately power.

Frantz Fanon, who would have been unable to work in Boumedienne's Algeria, might well have become an adoptive "Palestinian" next, for he

[3] He was strangled to death in a Frankfurt hotel-room in October 1970.

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could only find a place for himself in a movement and a struggle and not in an established order. As a psychiatrist who was against "long-term institutionalisation" and in favour of "community care," Fanon would probably have made louder protests against Russian political psychiatry than many influential doctors in the West. Did Fanon, the world revolutionary, belong to the "Homeless Left," as Herbert Luethy once described it? Perhaps it should nowadays be referred to as the home-seeking Left. For Fanon rootlessness was not the normal state of a revolutionary seeking to liberate mankind; it was only a personal misfortune. How could France ever be a true home to him? This was impossible, as he showed so movingly in *Black Skin, White Masks*. But France was more important to his spiritual and political development than he cared to admit.

IT COULD WELL BE that Frantz Fanon is no longer important—if he ever was—for the understanding of what Africa is and is becoming. But for the understanding of what Europe was and could be, this intellectual from Martinique who "explored the frontiers" and lived in "extreme situations"—this pupil of Marx, Nietzsche, Jaspers and Sartre—is eminently important. He should not be forgotten, although a mere dozen years after his early death his prophecies about a new world to come—not for the first, or the last, time in the history of the romantic intelligentsia—are, or at least now seem to be, illusions.

B Roads

Once they had the future taped.
Once they were just a blueprint
in their father's eye.

Long ago all the nonsense
was knocked out of them.
Now they've settled for good,

and don't doubt they are needed:
a sequence of pressures
has made them what they are.

Something in the City
is serious business,
black pinstripes, or plain grey.

(In the country they wear
pepper and salt, are known
by unclassified names.)

Day in, day out, they have
their shoulder to the wheel.
Their nose is the grindstone.

Gradually they come
to quiet conclusions.
They turn to history,

in the striae of the Ice Age
find lasting company,
their heroes in the dead stars.

Roger Garfitt

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AMERICAN CHRONICLE

Poisoning the Wells of Academe

By John R. Silber

NO ONE REALISED IT at the time: on 2 December 1964, higher education in the United States had just reached the zenith of its public esteem and entered a downward course. It had begun its upward climb (after 4 October 1957) when the launch of the first *Sputnik* and subsequent Soviet technological and scientific successes began to be seen as a judgment on America for her financial neglect of educational institutions and her McCarthyite abuse of intellectuals. The sudden triumph of Soviet science and technology was now seen as a vindication of Adlai Stevenson and other "eggheads" who had argued in favour of free inquiry and research untrammelled by ideological restraint.

The Congressional reaction to *Sputnik* was rapid enactment of a national legislative programme to support education and research at all levels. The budget of the National Science Foundation was rapidly increased, and major NSF grants were allocated to universities for the stimulation of research and teaching. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 provided scholarships, not only in the sciences, but in the social sciences and the humanities as well, and led eventually to the development (by Jerrold Zacharias and others) of new elementary and secondary curricula in science, mathematics, and language.

At all levels, the scholar, the research scientist, the teacher, and the student were honoured with rising esteem and rapidly increasing salaries and stipends. In the fall of 1957, as the moon completed its last semester in solitary orbit about the earth, mean faculty salaries for full professors in 39 institutions surveyed by the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) ranged from $7,900 to $11,300. By 1964, those salaries had been increased by more than 50% (and academics began to have the unfamiliar experience of meeting people socially who earned less than they!). Even those teaching in elementary and secondary schools prospered by comparable percentage increases in salary. From 1957 to 1965 the total expenditure on public elementary and secondary education almost doubled. Wherever one looked, whatever the measure, education had received a vote of confidence and had prospered. 437,000 degrees were conferred on Commencement Day 1958; by 1964 the total was 614,000. Even more impressive were the figures for doctorates: the last pre-*Sputnik* class had numbered 9,000; by 1964 there were 15,000 Ph.Ds.

BY THE MIDDLE 1960s there was a national consensus that education provided the solution to social no less than financial and military ills: the Peace Corps, the Job Corps, Operation Headstart, and Civil Rights legislation were all political embodiments of academic ideas. By 1965 it was generally assumed that the national treasury would be diverted in significant measure to the support of educational institutions on all levels, because they were clearly perceived as a national resource and their development as a national goal.

ALTHOUGH INCREASES IN SUPPORT were to continue to the end of the '60s, the upward vector then began to flatten, and by 1970 what had been perceived as a national asset had become something of such dubious merit that more than one politician tried to gain office by campaigning against it. From the first seizure of a campus building at the University of California at Berkeley on 2 December 1964, this conversion took just four years. Although it might seem obvious now that the right of free speech carries no corollary guarantee of taxpayers' subsidy, and that no such guarantee can be extracted by force, we probably should not blame Clark Kerr for having failed to articulate these points with decisive clarity. After all, higher education in this country has no Distant Early Warning system, unless it be California itself.

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The message of the Free (and the Filthy) Speech movements was not missed everywhere. Commissions made up of faculty, students, and administrators were established at many universities and colleges to develop codes of conduct that would protect academic freedom by securing peace and order on campus.

But the concern to meet the crisis presaged by events in California went unnoticed at several other universities which were overwhelmed by the crisis. Unfortunately, these set the pattern. Grayson Kirk of Columbia and James Perkins of Cornell could not claim to be surprised, since Clark Kerr's unhappy exit from the University of California should have been their clear and early warning. They were good men, but following the riots at Berkeley they failed to bring their faculty and student representatives together to prepare for conflict on their own campuses. They operated from an aloof standpoint that made the danger seem unreal. When the crisis came, they were incapable of careful discrimination between privileged free speech and prohibited criminal action; and, unsure of this distinction, they were incapable of decisive action on the basis of it. Neither assumed the role of educator to explain the political, moral, and legal issues at hand to his students and faculty and to urge on academic grounds their constructive response to rational persuasion. Not only did Grayson Kirk fail to explain that trashing his Columbia office was no cultural achievement, for whatever reasons, he took no counter action against the occupiers of the Columbia buildings. He permitted the friends of trespassers to supply the trespassers with food. He himself supplied them with electricity and water; later he complained that they had used the electricity to copy confidential documents. James Perkins at Cornell, torn between his Quaker background and his legal training, sat on the ground and bantered with students while his campus was held at gunpoint. Thus he forfeited the confidence and respect of faculty, students, and public. These good men did less than they could have to preserve free speech and discussion, to prohibit arson and criminal trespass, to discourage unlawful assembly and unlawful use and concealment of firearms.

I am not speaking from hindsight. In 1966, for example, President Hackerman of the University of Texas at Austin, appointed a special committee, composed of students and professors from law and other disciplines, to develop a new set of rules and regulations for student affairs. Because there was expert legal guidance, this code met all the requirements of fairness and due process; because there was responsible student participation, the legitimacy of the revised rules was generally

Academic Sale

New York

U.S. COLLEGES, *faced with financial pressures they have not known since Depression days, are resorting more and more to the hard sell in search of students. The competition for enrolment and the money it produces is generally polite, but fierce. The stakes are millions of dollars nationally and, for some schools, survival. Some will not make it.*

"It's becoming a dog-eat-dog situation," said Charles A. Marshall, assistant executive director of the National Association of College Admissions Counsellors. "There's always been competition for top athletes and the best scholars, but now it's simply a matter of keeping the classes filled and surviving."

The pressure has led colleges to restructure their curriculums for an increasingly vocation-minded constituency.

And it has led to recruiting and promotional techniques that the schools never thought of, or rejected out of hand, a few years ago—direct-mail barrages, radio spot commercials, scholarships to lure students who do not need the financial help, and occasionally tuition rebates for students who recruit others.

The squeeze has also spawned a controversial industry of admissions entrepreneurs. Hard-charging men and women, most with backgrounds as college admissions or development officers, they offer services that cost struggling colleges amounts ranging from a few hundred dollars for consulting work to the entire admissions budget of the client school.

Direct-mail blitzes, used for years by vocational schools but scorned by colleges, are scorned no longer. One Massachusetts high school senior had received 143 pieces of unsolicited college-recruiting mail by mid-March this year. Other ways of finding students include mass telephoning campaigns, usually by outside firms; participation in the growing number of "college fairs" for high school students; the radio spot commercials, and the use of travelling recruiting vans.

Probably the dean of the admissions entrepreneurs and the take-over management pioneer is Dennis Johnson, 35, head of Johnson Associates of Oak Brook, Ill. His clients have included Colorado Women's College and Houston Baptist College. His company employed 26 people and grossed about $700,000 a year. "You've got to have programmes that serve the needs of young people, that lead to employability and upward mobility," he said.

"We're in a buyer's market," said Richard J. Nelson, president of Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, where enrolment has dropped from 23,000 to 20,000. "The kids are beginning to dictate. They don't want a maths requirement, they don't want a language requirement. The very integrity of our programmes is being challenged."

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE (*Paris*)

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recognised. The administration, moreover, accepted the responsibility to assume an educative role by entering into confrontation with students whenever direct meetings were needed; administrative and faculty positions were presented, and those who proposed to disrupt the University were denied their strategy of misinformation. Frequent meetings of the faculty assured consultation and full discussion between faculty and administration on potentially disruptive issues. As a consequence, there was no serious disruption on the campus of that university other than those directed by a member of the Board of Regents.

MANY ADMINISTRATORS, HOWEVER, FAILED in the period from 1965 to 1968 to make clear the special character of the university as a free market-place of ideas, and the conditions on which the freedom of that market-place depends. With revolution in the wind, they might well have recalled the words of Edmund Burke:

> "Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites. . . . Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there is without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. . . ."[1]

In the inaction of these university presidents, "Operation Pander" was established and quickly set a pattern for vacillation emulated by administrators across the nation, just as the mindless behaviour of Mark Rudd and his band of militants found student imitators as Rudd travelled across the country lecturing on desecration as art. Violence stalked the campus, in what has sometimes been called a triumph of social involvement by students, but which was in fact largely a burlesque—often a cruel one—in which students and faculty of radical persuasion, like cuckoos, laid eggs in the nest of the black civil rights movement and hatched such dubious birds as the Free Speech Movement and such slogans as "Student Power" and "Student as Nigger." Because those who were threatened by the military draft sensitively recognised the folly of the Viet Nam War, we should not overlook the means chosen by some activist students to express their opposition to the war—occupying buildings, bringing firearms on to campus, destroying manuscripts of books, assaulting and kidnapping university officials, and murdering at least one student.

The academy—which had successfully resisted the politicisation of its academic programme and restrictions on academic freedom and discussion from without—failed to resist politicisation from within. The remarkably thoughtful, scholarly, and impassioned discussions of U.S. policy in Viet Nam and in the Dominican Republic that were the subject of the early Teach-Ins gave way to mass meetings, rhetorical overkill, and disruption. Faculty and students in one university after another, by adopting statements on the Viet Nam War, attempted to legislate political and moral orthodoxy by the majority vote of the minorities present at the meetings. There began gradually to emerge a kind of ideological licence that would ultimately threaten to enslave the academy and destroy its freedom.

ACADEMICS DEVELOPED a novel meaning for the term "political crime", which had once meant an action rendered criminal solely by its political content but which now came to mean a crime—however vicious—justified by its political motivation. This new definition of "political crime" found swift adoption not merely on college campuses but throughout the world, as hijackers, kidnappers, killers, and Watergate "plumbers" justified their contempt for law through an inappropriate appeal to political motivation. A man jailed merely for opposing a government can be truly described as a political prisoner. A man who is jailed after he has attempted the assassination of a government official is *not* a political prisoner. He is a criminal who may have committed his crime from a political motive.

Not only was political crime given a novel meaning; the concept of academic freedom was transformed. Once, it entailed an immunity for what is said and done by dedicated, thoughtful, conscientious scholars in pursuit of truth or the truest account. Now it came to entail, rather, an immunity for whatever is said and done, responsibly or carelessly, within or without the walls of academia, by persons unconcerned for the truth; who, reckless, incompetent, frivolous or even malevolent, promulgate ideas for which they can claim no expertise, or even commit deeds for which they can claim no sanction of law.

At the same time, there arose the notion that there was no freedom to be wrong and that right could be determined by the voice of a mass meeting, however poorly attended. This was the ideological license articulated by Herbert Marcuse. Against the concept of a free market-place of ideas in which contrasting ideas are tolerated, he proposed to permit only a "liberating tolerance."

> "Liberating tolerance then would mean intolerance against movements from the right and toleration of movements from the left. As to the scope of this

[1] Quoted in Duncan Williams, "Education for What?", *Prospect* II (December 1973), pp. 23-24.

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> tolerance and intolerance: . . . it would extend to the stage of action as well as of discussion and propaganda, of deed as well as of word."[2]

Marcuse's repudiation of the traditional conception of the university and of the value of controversy in the pursuit of truth has gained a strong foothold in nearly all American colleges and universities.

THE SIGNIFICANCE of this widespread adoption and support of ideological license should not be overlooked. Nor should it be minimised merely because the worst effects of this kind of politicisation have been reduced by a later generation of administrators who reject the notion that a forcible blockade of a college building is any more peaceful than the blockade of a country. They came to recognise that there can be a civilised use of force in which a thoughtful, rationally constituted civilian authority, after sustained efforts at rational persuasion, calls in police power to restore order among those who are simply lawless. As a result of this recognition, our campuses have returned for the most part to a state of apparent civility not disturbingly worse than that which obtains outside. But it would be foolish to imagine that we have thereby become "depoliticised." The open campus may exist once more, but it is difficult to assert that it again provides a free market-place of ideas.

Academic freedom originally had no other purpose than to ensure this free market-place in which controversy in the pursuit of truth might flourish. Although the general public has long been shocked to hear controversy praised for its own sake, and although Marcuse and the radical Left use their ideology to license doctrine and limit controversy—hence both make common cause in urging the university to support and defend "truth" rather than controversy—neither the Right nor the Left has met the arguments of the traditional defenders of academic freedom. The strongest defence of all freedoms including academic freedom lies in the historical fact that open controversy between alternative points of view is far better for mankind than the unopposed presentation of dogma. In the march toward civilisation men have learned that "time makes ancient good uncouth" and that the self-evident truths of the past are the patent falsehoods of the present. In the words of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes:

> "But when men have realised that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out."[3]

[2] "Repressive Tolerance," in *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (with Barrington Moore, Jr, and Robert Paul Wolff, 1969), p. 109.

[3] Abrams *v.* United States, 250 U.S. 616, 624 (1912).

Academic Oaths

London

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY *has decided that academic freedom cannot be defended against the "enemy within the gates". That, at least, is the conclusion I draw from the abject failure of the authorities to take any action against the 17 members of the staff who signed a letter declaring their support for the mob action that prevented an American professor who had been invited to give a university lecture on Vietnam from getting a hearing. However, I recognize that an individual vice-chancellor may be in difficulties if he is not backed up by his colleagues: and in this case I had hoped that when the vice-chancellors met last week they would collectively proclaim, that if academic freedom is to mean anything, no one can sign such a letter and remain a member of a university staff. Alas, the statement they put out was so vague and woolly that it will probably provoke another outbreak of the blind militancy it was designed to prevent.*

Surely the time has come for our university dons to consider whether they should not impose on themselves a code of conduct similar to that of other professions—the law and medicine for example. A doctor cannot practice or claim clinical freedom without accepting a code of conduct that imposes upon him the duties as well as the rights originally included in the Hippocratic oath. Why not a declaration corresponding to the Hippocratic oath, under which the don pledges himself to help in guaranteeing inside the university in which he works the complete academic freedom to say and think the unpopular thoughts, which he claims for himself? I cannot see how any academic worth his salt could object to signing such a declaration and regarding conformity with it as a condition of his employment.

R. H. S. Crossman

in THE TIMES *(London)*

STUDENTS WHO OCCUPY *university buildings or shout down Right-Wing speakers were backed by a university don in a book published yesterday ["Academic Freedom", Penguin Educational Special, 50p.].*

Mr Anthony Arblaster, Left-wing lecturer in Politics at Sheffield University, says Vice-Chancellors were hypocritical to tell students to use reason, for they did not rule by virtue of their superior rationality and were not even elected.

"Students resort to direct action of various kinds for much the same reasons as workers use the strike weapon—because the structure of power leaves them with no effective method of exerting pressure on those who have power over them."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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The reflective student of history knows the full extent of the danger inherent in stifling controversy and suppressing opinions alleged to be false—the danger that without controversy and argument there is no means of distinguishing true from false opinions.

John Stuart Mill in *On Liberty* (1859), gave an unsurpassed statement of this point:

> "But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is that it is robbing the human race, posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose, what is ever as great a benefit, the clear perception and livelier impression of the truth produced by its collision with error."

It follows, of course, that professors have faith (or should have faith) in the power of truth to win in the free market-place of ideas. University faculties profess (or should profess) that confidence in reason and truth bequeathed to all of us by John Milton, who wrote in the *Areopagitica* (his stout defence in 1644 of unlicensed printing and stout denial of the right to censor and destroy books):

> "As soon kill a man as kill a good book . . . though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt Her strength. Let Her and Falsehood grapple; whoever knew Truth put to worse in a free and open encounter?"

Professors and students say (or should say) with Milton:

> "Give me liberty to know, to utter, to argue freely according to conscience above all liberties. . . ."

And, like Milton, they understand (or should understand) that:

> "Where there is much desire to learn there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making."

In dedicating the University of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, in what is probably the first statement on academic freedom, adapted Milton's dicta to the occasion:

> "This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead nor to tolerate error so long as reason is left free to combat it."[4]

John Stuart Mill later underscored Jefferson's point by saying:

> "If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. . . .
>
> "We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still."

Well into our own day, Milton's, Jefferson's, and Mill's vision of truth-finding as a kind of adversary process or competition for intellectual favour has remained the standard.

This, then, is the condition of truth-seeking to be secured and sustained by the presence of academic freedom which ensures toleration of all points of view with vigorous criticism of each.

BUT THERE ARE FURTHER CONDITIONS for a free market-place of ideas which have received scant attention, not because they were not required and expected of all members of an academic community and of all those who respect academic freedom, but rather because they were taken for granted. They are conditions that guarantee academic responsibility, and only a few have been singled out for examination by the AAUP. The tendency of academics to introduce extraneous material into the classroom has prompted AAUP's warning that the intrusion of such material runs counter to academic responsibility. But nowhere in the AAUP position on academic freedom and responsibility do we have a statement prohibiting the falsification of evidence. The AAUP simply took for granted—as did Jefferson, Milton, Mill, and Holmes—that well-poisoning in the academic market-place is forbidden. Prompted by a profound, almost pietistic respect for truth and the truest account, and an absolute abhorrence of anyone who would falsify evidence or even be careless in its use, neither they nor the AAUP thought such warnings necessary or appropriate.

The free market-place of ideas can be destroyed, or damaged in many ways—by disruption, shutdown, false advertising, false pricing, negligence and well-poisoning. The AAUP's silence on these important threats to academic freedom stems merely from the high-mindedness of its membership and its leaders. They did not foresee the necessity to argue the obvious. Had Committee A of the AAUP ever proposed in a draft statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure such language as "*Members of the profession should not falsify evidence*," the annual meeting would have howled this down as a gratuitous insult to the honour of the profession. No, it has always been assumed within the profession that its members would observe the highest standards of civility, objectivity, and fidelity to the search for truth.

Yet, of all the threats to the free market-place of ideas, perhaps the most serious is the threat of well-poisoning. Such well-poisoning can be

[4] Merrill Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (1970), p. 987.

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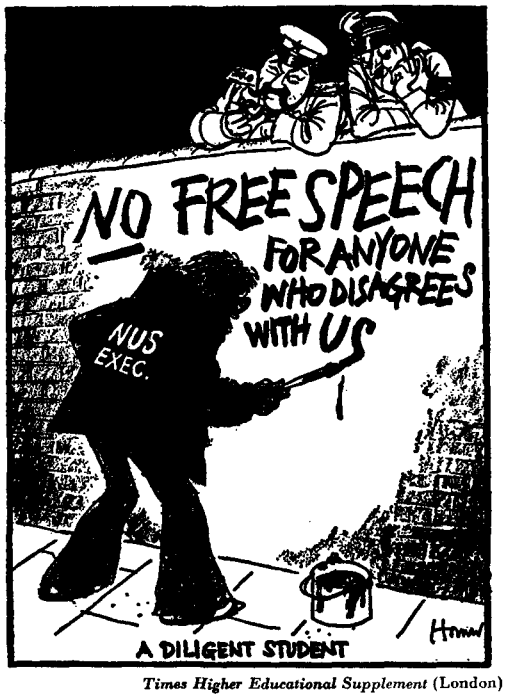
carried out in many ways, making a pure well polluted, and a polluted one deadly.

1 SOMETIMES POLITICAL ZEAL leads a usually careful scholar to carelessness and rhetorical distortion that he would usually avoid and despise. Noam Chomsky, for example, has written:

> "Three times in a generation, American technology has laid waste a helpless Asian country. . . . The systematic destruction of a virtually defenseless Japan was carried out with a sense of moral rectitude that was then, and remains today, unchallenged. . . . In Korea the process was repeated, with only a few qualms. It is the amazing resistance of the Vietnamese that has forced us to ask: What have we done?"[5]

Chomsky is an excellent linguist and philosopher of language. How do we explain, then, this simplistic rendering of history by Chomsky the historical commentator? This Chomsky never asks whether America's three Asian involvements are comparable: he simply assumes that they are, where he should have known better. Suppose that we grant that Japan —which introduced at Nanking in 1937 the annihilation bombing of civilians and pioneered the concept of total war against humanity that was brutally developed by the *Luftwaffe* at Warsaw and Rotterdam, the same Japan that imposed heavy losses on the United States at Pearl Harbour, Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Iwojima, Okinawa and the Philippines— is correctly described as a "defenceless Asian country."



Times Higher Educational Supplement (London)

NEWS ITEM: *The Executive of the National Union of Students (NUS), the official body representing the government-financed organisation of which all British university students are dues-paying members, has called for the blacklisting of a list of six "pro-fascist, racist" speakers, to which the name of Professor H. J. Eysenck has now been added. Meetings should be cancelled and, if necessary, disrupted. . . .*

And let us suppose for the sake of argument that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki —thought at the time to save the United States one million casualties in the invasion of the islands of Japan—were unnecessary and that by some stretch of logic and historical knowledge we can conclude that the United States engaged in "the systematic destruction of a virtually defenceless Japan." How does this explain Chomsky's failure to distinguish the action in Viet Nam and Japan from the action in Korea, so that in his eyes our defence of South Korea constitutes one of the three times in a generation that American technology has laid waste a helpless Asian country? There is no plausible way to deny that the Korean War began with the invasion of the South from the North. The people of South Korea, quite unlike the people of South Viet Nam, had no doubts about their loyalty to their government or about their opposition to Communism. They fought hard and well beside the forces of the United Nations that had come to their assistance. Chomsky fails to mention that the American involvement in Korea was supported by a United Nations mandate, that the United Nations condemned the action of the North Koreans and called upon member states of the United Nations to come to the aid of the South Korean government. He fails to mention that President Truman restricted American military activities to those limits imposed by the United Nations mandate, and that when General Douglas MacArthur repeatedly overstepped these limits to the point of questioning the supremacy of the civilian authority, Truman relieved him of his command, an action politically disastrous for the President and his Party alike.

When an intellectual proceeds as Chomsky does here to rewrite history and to use his interpretations as if they were historical data, he pollutes the well of the market-place. Whether or not this is intentional is beside the point. I would not argue that Chomsky's political writings justify his exclusion from the market-place, but they call for counter-argument and analysis so that his views are subjected to relentless scrutiny and criticism.

Chomsky's normal care and scholarly restraint are more flagrantly cast aside in his *American Power and the New Mandarins* (1969), in which he attributes to Harry Truman these sentiments, alleged to have been proclaimed in 1947:

[5] *Ethics* (October 1968), pp. 2-3.

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> "all freedom is dependent on freedom of enterprise. . . . The whole world should adopt the American system. . . . The American system can survive in America only if it becomes a world system." (p.268)

Chomsky gives as the source for the quotation D. F. Fleming's *The Cold War and Its Origins*. In this work one finds an account of a speech Truman gave at Baylor University on 6 March 1947. What one does not find is precisely the remark about all freedom being dependent on freedom of enterprise, but rather an obvious paraphrase:

> "[Truman] explained that freedom was more important than peace, and that freedom of worship and speech were dependent on freedom of enterprise."[6]

One also finds, in quotation marks, and cited from J. P. Warburg's *Put Yourself in Marshall's Place* (1948, pp. 12, 46), the statement from which Chomsky adapted the remark about the desirability of the American system and the necessity of its worldwide adoption. I say, "adapted", for Chomsky's version changes tense and mode—curious slip for so distinguished a linguist—so as to suppress the fact that the quotation is *indirect*.

In a review of Chomsky's book, Professor Arthur Schlesinger noted this conversion of paraphrase into quotation, an exposure subsequently given wider currency by Lionel Abel in the pages of *Commentary* (May 1969). Chomsky's rejoinder was that although conversion *was* "careless and inexcusable", the paraphrases were accurate and perceptive, and so no real harm had been done. Schlesinger replied that they were not, and the two paladins continued to fill the *Letters* column for some months with their increasingly ill-natured accusations and rejoinders.[7] We can do no better than to follow Schlesinger's suggestion to look at the Truman speech itself.

The paraphrased material derives from two separate passages:

1. "There is one thing that Americans value even more than peace. It is freedom. Freedom of worship—freedom of speech—freedom of enterprise. It must be true that the first two of these freedoms are related to the third."

2. "But if controls over trade are to be really tight, tariffs are not enough. Even more drastic measures can be used. Quotas can be imposed on imports, product by product and month by month. Importers can be forbidden to buy abroad without obtaining licenses. Those who buy more than is permitted can be fined or jailed. Everything that comes into a country can be kept within limits determined by a central plan.

   This is regimentation. And this is the direction in which much of the world is headed at the present time. If this trend is not reversed, the Government of the United States will be under pressure, sooner or later, to use these same devices to fight for markets and raw materials. . . . This is not the American way. It is not the way to peace."[8]

The question is not whether these passages are accurately paraphrased in the versions given by Fleming and Warburg. It is rather whether they are so patently and precisely equivalent that no man of sense would care whether he had read the original or the paraphrase. Now, whether any paraphrase ever meets such a standard may well be doubted. But surely these do not.

Even if one considers Chomsky's conversion of paraphrase into quotation accidental, his cavalier insistence that it makes no difference is sharply at odds with his admission that the conversion was "careless and inexcusable." In any case, it is the sort of carelessness about evidence which characterises the negligent academic well-poisoner. Rational discussion of foreign policy and sober assessment of the nation's strengths and weaknesses are not encouraged by this means.

2 To take a somewhat more serious piece of well-poisoning, in the forum of an "underground" newspaper—one wonders what Sartre and other survivors of the French underground Résistance would make of this thoroughly dishonest appropriation of the term—Howard Zinn once observed that it was a deficiency of philosophers that they "are sometimes annoyed by the intrusion of facts into comfortably vacuous generalities." He then took me to task for having claimed that Martin Luther King, Jr. "emphasized the importance of showing respect for lawfulness at the same time that he refused to abide by a specific law." Commenting on my statement, Zinn said:

> "That is a gross distortion. It is true that King went to jail rather than escaping—but it isn't at all clear that he did this out of any overall respect for 'lawfulness'—rather than out of tactical and dramatic motives, or simply out of lack of choice. I doubt that King would criticize Angela Davis or Daniel Berrigan, who carried their defiance of authority beyond that point of arrest, who refused to surrender to the government because they believed its activities did not deserve respect. It is true that King urged respect for his opponents, and love for all fellow beings, but it is not true that he 'emphasized . . . respect for lawfulness.' I knew Martin Luther King, and was with him on occasions of civil disobedience, in Alabama and Georgia, and it is a disservice to his memory to twist his views

[6] D. F. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins* (1961), vol. I, p. 436.
[7] October, December 1969; February, March, May, June 1970.
[8] *New York Times*, 7 March 1947.

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so as to omit what was by far his chief emphasis: resistance to immoral authority."[9]

Let us see if "an intrusion of facts" will disclose who has "twisted" King's views. After all, Martin Luther King was an articulate exponent of his ideas, and it is (to say the least) curious that Zinn, trying to prove what King must have thought on so central an issue, cites not one word from King himself. If we go no further than the "Letter from Birmingham Jail", we readily see why Zinn may have preferred to invoke King's memory rather than King's words.

> "In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law as the rabid segregationist would do. This would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do it openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty by staying in jail to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the very highest respect for law."[10]

That is the clearest possible evidence that Martin Luther King himself believed in the distinction which Zinn calls a "gross distortion." It is testimony available in one of the most accessible of King's writings.

Nor is this the only direct quotation from the Letter which contradicts Zinn's distortion. King insists:

> "A law is unjust, for example, if the majority group compels a minority group to obey the statute but does not make it binding on itself. By the same token a law in all probability is just if the majority is itself willing to obey it."

Now Zinn observed in his piece that "John Silber did not even seem to be embarrassed as he invoked the name of Martin Luther King." Why should anyone be embarrassed to be caught expounding King's views honestly and *accurately*? The more pertinent question is: Was Zinn embarrassed in so shamelessly distorting and degrading King's ethical position?

Wherever Zinn was in Alabama with Martin Luther King, it was not in the cell in Birmingham. There is no reason to believe that Zinn is a more reliable exponent of King's views than King himself. King did not win the Nobel Prize for his advocacy of lawlessness, but for his passionate crusade for human dignity within the context of law and love. We can see very clearly who it is that has done King's memory a disservice by poisoning the well and cheapening the standards of discourse.

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[9] *Phoenix* (Boston) April 12, 1972.
[10] "Letter from Birmingham Jail," *Christian Century*, 12 June 1963, p. 769.
[11] *Change*, March 1974, pp. 12–13.

3 IN MAY 1968 LAWRENCE CAROLINE, a member of the Philosophy Department of The University of Texas at Austin, crowning a series of irresponsible speeches, lectures, and activities, stated before a crowd of some 2,000 students that there were five concentration camps in the State. He said that while he was not concerned about their existence, he could understand if his black brothers suffered from paranoia because of them. When I asked him to identify the concentration camps he was unable to do so. Did the Philosophy Department of which he was a member then rise up and demand his dismissal on the ground that he had violated the basic principles of rational inquiry, namely, that he had wilfully and knowingly distorted the truth? In fact, that he had willingly and knowingly told a lie in order to make a rhetorical point before a large group of students, to whom, as a professor, he owed a very special responsibility? Not at all. Although this was a clear case of poisoning the well in the market-place of ideas, and a gross betrayal of academic freedom through gross academic irresponsibility—amounting, in fact, to academic enslavement through ideological license—the Philosophy Department was divided on the question of whether Caroline's contract should be renewed. Ultimately, the Dean had to decide that it would not be. It is true that if the Dean had extended Caroline's contract, he would have been overruled by the Regents.[11] But that scarcely justifies Caroline's deliberate distortion of truth; it merely shows that Regents aren't always wrong. I wonder what would happen today if the fabricator of the Piltdown Skull were a member of the faculty of an American university. I dare say his fraud, if exposed, might none the less be excused—provided he claimed that it was done for some political or other high-minded purpose.

4 IF IT IS DIFFICULT to extend the benefit of doubt in the Caroline case, the well-poisoner in the next case leaves us no choice. He *tells* us that he is poisoning the well. When I was Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at The University of Texas at Austin, I received the following letter from a young faculty member:

> *Dear Dean Silber:*
> I enclose an article which I have submitted to *The Daily Texan* [the student newspaper at The University of Texas]. In fairness I thought you should see it. I say in fairness, because the article is definitely not fair. I made no attempt at objectivity. I aimed at a gut-level response that would cause a confrontation and lead to rational discussion later on.
> I did not intend personal vilification. You have become a negative symbol; hence, I must oppose you.
> *Yours for a better University*

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When I received that letter, I immediately sent a copy of it to the Editor of *The Daily Texan* with my comment:

> "If you wish to publish this article, I think you should publish this letter as the author's comment on it."

The Editor of *The Daily Texan*, a fair-minded student, returned the article to the professor. Whereupon I received a second letter from the professor, in which he whined:

> "I only sent you my letter for your information. I did not intend that you should do anything about it."

When a faculty member behaves in this fashion, he achieves ultimate corruption. Having no power of self-control within, he must anticipate the imposition of control from without. And if the faculty as a whole does not have ways and means at its disposal to deal with corruption in its own professional ranks, it must expect to be disciplined either by the administration or by the public.

It is both deplorable and dangerous, however, whenever outsiders are called in to refine or reprove a university, or whenever an administrator has to reprove a faculty member. These tasks are properly the job of an autonomous, self-respecting faculty. I am deeply committed to the autonomy of the faculty and the university. But we must stop misusing the concept of autonomy. Since *nomos*, or law, is its fundamental root *autonomy* does not mean wilfulness or capriciousness or "doing one's own thing." One is autonomous only when he acts according to law that he has prescribed for himself. Kant, who introduced "autonomy" as a technical term in ethics, had the genius to see that a moral community depends for its very existence upon the lawful behaviour of each individual by virtue of his own respect for law. Instead of being coerced to cooperate within the lawful framework of a society, each morally sound individual cooperates in it because of his own decision to do so—hence, autonomously. But when autonomy is used simply as a synonym for wilfulness for the most irrational and antinomian activity—then obviously it is being misused; and its misuse must be stopped.

DESPITE THE FACT that one hears frequently about the "repression" of radical faculty by "reactionary administrations", it appears that well-poisoning rarely gets the poisoner into any trouble whatever, and may (if done with adequate attention to public relations) advance him in the profession. That this extraordinary state of affairs should obtain is largely due to our almost universal acceptance of an absolute concept of academic freedom, namely, that the academic can say whatever he pleases about whatever he pleases, whenever and wherever he pleases, and be fully immune from unpleasant consequences.

Present tenure policy encourages anyone to become a sophist rather than to accept even the most attenuated form of Socratic testing. When telling the truth carries no risk, what risk is there in telling lies? When tenure functions as sinecure—as it almost always does—it does not necessarily ensure academic freedom. It may rather encourage academic licence and abuse. If a man is guaranteed absolute immunity for telling the truth, he enjoys an absolute immunity for telling lies. The search for truth is inevitably fraught with risk. We do not have to advocate a return to the martyrdoms of Copernicus, Jan Hus, and Galileo, or the social and professional ostracisation of Semmelweis, in order to recognise that some level of risk is probably required to save truth—not from error—but from frivolous and malicious distortion.

There is a sense in which untrammelled academic freedom is the intellectual equivalent of inherited wealth. Having it does not ensure that one becomes fat and sloppy, but it requires a certain amount of character to reject the life of ignoble ease. Intellectually, such a life is not the absence of thought (any more than the material life of ignoble ease is the absence of activity, for it may be characterised by frenetic doing). It is rather an abandoning of the mind to its own devices. Such an abandonment means that its victim remains exiled to the world of the sleeping, particular to each, and never enters that world of the waking which Heraclitus tells us is common to all. One of the dangers in providing men with immunity from all consequences of what they say is an increased risk of such abandonment, and potentially in the guise—far more dangerous than overt irrationalism—of rational thought. Lysenko, after all, managed to secure from Stalin the right, in effect, to publish without the risk of exposure by the scientific community. The result was not to the advantage of Soviet genetics or Lysenko.

THE ABSOLUTISING OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM has been in part the inadvertent consequence of tenure that, inadvertently, has come to function as sinecure. No matter what revisions are made in tenure rules and practices, tenure can never protect or guarantee academic freedom, which should be exercised and enjoyed by all faculty, whether tenured or untenured, and by students and administrators as well. Academic freedom is protected and guaranteed by the courage of individual professors, and by individual administrators who protect individual members of

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the faculty, and by individual students. If they express their freedom responsibly, they will not expect immunity from criticism or public disapproval; they will recognise these risks as one of the essential conditions of responsibility. Provision of seven-year terms as basic units of academic employment might, for example, even in the absence of any tenure, effectively protect free men from almost all capricious firings in the heat of specific controversies without immunising them from the risks that ensure academic integrity and responsibility. Ultimately, however, the academic neither needs nor deserves a greater protection for his political freedom than that afforded the ordinary citizen. There is (and in my opinion, should be) a price for glory.

If any change is to be made in our tenure rules, it is the faculty, not the administration, that must make them. But every member of the academic community—even the university president—has the right to express an opinion on this issue. A Hindu may discuss the slaughter of a sacred cow, for example, but he must not kill one.

Another cost of our unmoderated American standard of academic freedom is an increasing difficulty in maintaining even the most footloose standards of academic duty as obligations increasingly fail to be correlative to rights. The market-place of ideas is corrupted by a variety of ideologies that are not especially political. It is not unknown for a professor to begin the year by announcing to his students that no one will receive less than a *B* in his course. (I wait in vain to hear that some student has responded by asking the professor if he is afraid he can't hold the class without pandering in this way.) It sometimes even happens that a professor turns in a grade list with all *A*'s. It would not take an excessively suspicious nature to suspect that such a list is a perjured document, nor a very demanding one to doubt that its author has failed to make a careful and honest assessment of work. Suppose that the administration were to call such a teacher in and say to him, "Look, you know as well as we that your students are performing at differential levels. You know that this place has a policy of identifying and recording these levels. Awarding honest grades is a part of your job, and if you don't start doing it, you are going to be dismissed for non-performance of contract. . . ." In any inquest on such a termination, it would doubtless be argued that grading, being a professional duty, is protected by academic freedom, and that if a teacher believes the *A-F* scale to be fascist and repressive, academic freedom will protect his refusal to use it. And doubtless many faculty, themselves careful and honest graders, would endorse this procedural argument.

WHAT IS BEING ABANDONED HERE is a condition on which the development of scientific truth depends: namely, the expectation of gradually increasing competence among students and the reservation of positions in graduate schools and in the professions for those who have clearly demonstrated extraordinary ability. The movement toward *"pass/fail"* (or *"pass/no record"*)

Sloman at Essex

THE DECISION *to close Essex University has not been formally discussed and will only be taken in the last resort, Dr Albert Sloman, the vice-chancellor in the middle of the storm of student discontent, stated this week. There is an uneasy lull: the students return on April 22 and the trial of 105 students on charges of disruption and obstructing the police takes place a week later.*

The disciplinary procedures of the university against 38 students who disrupted lectures and invaded the vice-chancellor's study last November continue. Many of the charges have been dropped. The three students who have been recommended for expulsion have the right of appeal.

It is upon these procedures that Dr Sloman, aged 53, is prepared to stake his academic career, and possibly the future of the university. It is an issue, he says, affecting all universities.

Asked whether a distinguished academic like himself was the best person to deal with student disorder, he replied: "It has been a very intense and personal campaign. It has included threats against my family. The windows of my house have been broken. I do not want to dwell on these. But of course I would be much happier not to have to deal with it myself. But it is absolutely essential to the purposes of academic society.

"IF ONE OF MY OWN *senior lecturers cannot lecture. If you strike at the freedom to lecture you are striking at the very heart of what a university is for. As executive head of the university I am here to see that a university discharges its central teaching and research functions. . . . I hope that reason will prevail even at this stage.*

"The essential issue here is the same for all universities", said Dr Sloman. "It is whether coercion, violence, damage and disruption will prevail over duly established, coolly deliberated disciplinary procedures.

"It is not that the image of the university has suffered. The image of the university will suffer if it is seen to tolerate behaviour which is wholly irreconcilable with the aims of academic society."

Dr Sloman does not believe that the disruption at Essex since the first heady days of student disquiet in 1968–69 has been any worse than at many other universities.

THE TIMES (*London*)

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grading, led in the past decade by students and younger faculty, is in part a move against a sort of élitism on which any significant scientific and scholarly achievement must depend. It is, largely an undisguised effort by the middle and upper-middle classes to protect themselves from *downward mobility*. Behind the egalitarian clichés lies hidden a profound conflict of interest that must be relentlessly exposed. Do we wish to waste the facilities of medical schools to educate any person not extraordinarily gifted? Do we wish to graduate from medical school and set loose upon our bodies anyone lacking in concern for his fellow man or in the intellectual power requisite to competence in medicine? Do we wish to admit to graduate school in physics any person incapable of handling differential equations? The music schools are not troubled by the egalitarian thrust: one plays the violin, or one does not. The élitist (not to say repressive) demand that the concert-master of the Boston Symphony Orchestra play the notes as they appear in the score, in approximately the right tempo, cannot easily be dismissed by egalitarian rhetoric.

It is only natural that professors who don't believe in grades may stop reading papers very carefully. This is a condition which accounts for the success throughout the country of paper-writing factories like "Termpapers Unlimited" and "Quality Bullshit", and the use of their fabrications in virtually every major university. Such fraud that makes mockery of every academic ideal can rarely succeed where professors grade their own papers with an eye to tracking the intellectual development of each student. These firms have counterfeited the very medium of exchange in academic life. And some universities have been guilty of more than simply providing an atmosphere in which students are tempted to dishonesty. They have refused to take decisive action to expose the fraud and root it out where discovered. They have been willing to drink from a poisoned well and seem oblivious to the dire consequences. When Boston University led the successful legal fight to put these firms out of business in Massachusetts, we discovered in their files the names of customers from every major institution in the area. We found, when we checked with some universities, that they were not interested in having the names—they intended to do nothing about it. At first, we felt some righteous indignation over this, for at Boston University the administration had passed the names to our several faculties and asked for action to put an end to the abuse. Although the majority of students found guilty were disciplined and a few had to leave the University, we found faculties remarkably tolerant towards those who had offended. In one case, a young woman who had used several store-bought papers was about to graduate with honours! She was required to write an additional paper in one course and her grade was lowered in another. But even after admitting her use of purchased term papers, she was allowed to graduate with honours. Perhaps it is to the moral credit of her faculty: having first sinned, they were perhaps unwilling to cast more than a few grains of sand.

THESE ARE EXAMPLES of academics who refuse some part of their duties, and by negligence or deliberate action disrupt the market-place of ideas. But there have been widespread examples of academics who refuse to do any part of their duty whatever, of the thoroughly dishonest term "student strike", a phenomenon in which students stop going to class and demand full credit for being absent. The term "strike" in this context is preposterous. When a workman goes on strike, he lays down his tools and forfeits his pay. Professor Richard Pipes has pointed out that when a student goes on strike he lays down his brain, but what does he forfeit? Nothing, if he can help it. But even more dishonest is the practice of the faculty voting itself a paid holiday under some such label as "moratorium", "days of rational discourse", or "strike." That such paid holidays voted by beneficiaries thereof amount to a raid on the institutional treasury ought to be obvious, but their proponents never cease to swell with honest pride in the degree of concern and involvement such paid vacations demonstrate. And more recently, when students have been less prone to such irresponsibility and more concerned with their studies, they have been castigated for their apathy.

Reed College recently was the scene of what must be a canonical example of this refusal to be academic, but on full salary. A teacher there suddenly found that his principles forbade his coming to campus at all. He withdrew to his house, where he founded something called "the College in Exxxile" (going Exxon several better, he always spelled it with at least three *x*'s). There, from midnight to three, alternate Tuesdays, he taught classes having little to do with the curriculum of the college. Because his bungalow would not accommodate the sophomore Humanities lecture, he would sit in a car on the frontier of the campus and lecture over short-wave radio, illuminating the work of Flaubert by reading from a Mexican comic-book life of the author. Suppose the administration finally called him to task and told him, "You will not get paid until you start operating on campus at regularly assigned hours. Take the matter up with the AAUP if you wish, but remember who signs

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your pay-cheque in the meantime." He would have found defenders—themselves quite innocent of such methodological fopperies—who would have argued that the scheduling of classes is a professional matter, not to be tampered with by petty academic bureaucrats.

In this case, he was not even put to that racking, but merely required to pick up his pay-check in person. He found that a man must live, and submitted. The monster custom lent a kind of easiness to his next indulgence, and the next, till use indeed did change the stamp of nature. His Parthian shot was to rent a large billboard near campus and garnish it with a photograph of the Acting President and the query, "Would you buy a used college from this man?"

But in most cases, university officials, troubled alike by the prospect of AAUP investigation and radical disruption, tend to let the innovators go their merry ways, free to deny Caesar even a widow's mite. And in each case, we see the notion of academic freedom, designed to shield the market-place of ideas, used to close it down entirely. These closures have at least the merit of being overt. Others are more insidious.

IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT to discuss highly controversial ideas on the American campus. There is no better example of this than the controversy surrounding the work of Professors Jensen, Herrnstein, Bronfenbrenner, Eysenck, and Shockley. Each of these scholars has been in some way harassed by those opposed to what they think are his ideas.[12] In 1972, when Professor Bronfenbrenner spoke at Boston University, a mob demanded that he recant his former errors. In a scene reminiscent of a Moscow purge trial, he obliged. Last spring Professor Eysenck was physically assaulted at a lecture, and at one major university after another —most recently at Yale—Shockley has been at the last minute denied a platform. The argument employed by those who would silence these scholars has been generally that they are "racists", and that racist ideas are impermissible. A sophistication of this argument has recently come from Professor Charles Isaacs of Staten Island Community College. He tells us that there should be no right to debate when truth is known, and that the truth is that racism—which he dogmatically identifies with Jensen's and Shockley's alleged intelligence differential—is wrong.[13] Racism as the expression of prejudice and persecution directed toward racial groups certainly is wrong. But just as wrong is Isaacs' prejudice against and persecution of those engaged in the open, unimpeded search for truth on controversial subjects, which he seems to fear more than respect. One wonders what Isaacs would say if Shockley claimed that Isaacs had shown himself to be an intellectual storm-trooper who ought to be hounded out of the profession. When one denies free speech to others, how shall one retain it for oneself?

Without getting into the complex ramifications of the controversy, it is possible to raise a number of important questions hanging on its resolution. Suppose we were able to measure a significant difference in IQ as between blacks and whites. First of all, we might develop once and for all a *reductio ad absurdum* of the concept of IQ as a measure of intelligence independent from environmental influences. If this be a myth, it is clearly one best put to rest, and the sooner the better. Second, we would almost certainly observe a substantial range of overlap between blacks and whites, a circumstance which ought to be sufficient to render absurd any pride of intelligence in either race. Third, if IQ were recognised not only as a reflection of native intelligence but also (as it almost certainly is) a response to environmental influences, then the IQ differential between blacks and whites would itself be a measure of the cultural deprivation of blacks and a way of quantifying for Congress and the state legislatures their obligation to take remedial steps in providing equal opportunity for the black community. No racist implications need follow from the most rigorous scientific examination of the concept of IQ. Racism, after all, resides in treating an individual as if he were a category. Refuse to do this, and what you believe about his category becomes irrelevant.

And yet, Chomsky himself has argued that because there is no *decent* reason for wanting to know whether there is an IQ differential among

Storrs, Conn.

State police today arrested 219 students who refused to end their occupation of the University of Connecticut library building, which they took over to dramatize demands for more opportunities and better studies for blacks.

The occupation by the students, mostly blacks, began in the Wilbur Cross Library shortly after midnight. State police were called in six hours later, after the students twice refused orders by school officials to leave.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

[12] See H. J. Eysenck, "The Dangers of the New Zealots". ENCOUNTER, December 1972, and "Hazards of the Academic Life" (on the case of Richard Herrnstein) in the same number.

[13] *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 3 December 1973.

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races, and because racists will exploit any evidence that there is, Herrnstein and others ought to cease and desist, turn to some less controversial avenue of inquiry.[14] As it stands, the academic community's implicit acceptance of Chomsky's argument and complacent acceptance of interruption of free discussion and inquiry is yet another disruption of the market-place.

Further, the thoughtful discussion of the efforts of Jensen, Herrnstein, Bronfenbrenner, and others should result in a sustained examination and re-evaluation of the methodology of the social sciences, which, by ignoring the interdependence of most social variables and apeing methods more appropriate to physics, leads perhaps not to truth but to error. The refinement of social science methodology might be one of the scientific gains of discussing these issues. Herrnstein needs to be opposed by colleagues worthy of him—by serious men—and not by rabble-rousers.

Christopher Jencks, author of *Inequality* (1972), should be opposed by someone who can examine with him the limitations of a methodology that cannot escape the egocentric predicament. Jencks reaches discouraging conclusions about the efficacy of education, primarily because he cannot measure the effect of the presence and absence of education in the single individual. Instead, he must measure different groups of individuals, and because he is dealing with different individuals, must confront the influence of such a vast array of variables that his conclusions must certainly be in doubt. The lack of sophistication in his methodology is a subject worthy of most careful examination. His political views and his moral principles, so far as I can discern, are beyond reproach (and whether they are or not is beside the point).

IN RECENT YEARS there has arisen the related question of the wares to be bought and sold in the market-place. Some examples of this are obvious enough. A university begins offering credit for a course in Judicial Astrology. That is, not in astrology as an historical phenomenon which has had and continues to have cultural significance, but astrology as a "science", its scientific pretensions unchallenged by the annihilating refutations they have received over the centuries. Or a university, in a burst of ecumenism, appoints a Voodoo priest-in-residence. Are these, perhaps, mad enough so that we can look forward to a time when sanity shall have returned, and such schools will wonder what they were doing?

More subtle, altogether more fashionable, and more likely to endure, is the growing fad for the use of the computer in social science research. This could be seen, if the investigator writes (or at least understands) his own programmes, as no more than a highly efficient way of storing and retrieving data. But when, as is all too often the case, the investigator relies blindly on someone else for his programming, there arises the grave danger that he will fail in having an intellectual grasp of the meaning and significance of his data, of how it is derived, of what weight is to be put upon it. When data are pulled together through computer technology by a variety of highly abstract and remote techniques, the intellectual grasp of them can become so attenuated as to place their value substantially in doubt.

Implicit in our increasing reliance on the computer are the fallacies that output equals data and that data equal knowledge. It is likely that Descartes was right to insist in his *Discourse on Method* that one has no assurance of truth unless one can grasp the entirety of argument in intellectual intuition, or see it (as Descartes would say) in the natural light of reason. What we fondly call a "knowledge explosion" is probably not even an explosion of data, but rather of print-out. That we should have become unsure not merely of the quality of our knowledge, but its very location, is a measure of the degree to which the market-place has been disrupted.

It is not so clear that this disruption has begun to attenuate the conditions requisite for science, but they have been made precarious. The willingness to follow truth close by the heels wherever she leads us, the insistence on having the evidence and all the evidence, the remorseless comparison of idea with idea, the necessary distinction between idea and act, the very belief in an external reality common to all, accessible to all, have been put at hazard by a failure to insist upon academic responsibility. George Orwell once remarked of a piece of nonsense that it was so bad that "only an intellectual could believe it." Many of the irresponsibilities of the academy are of the sort that only academics could tolerate.

THE COMMUNITY OUTSIDE LOOKS IN at the madness and doubts whether here, after all, is an institution worthy of any special admiration. It requires no very subtle understanding to know that a community in which intellectual questions are settled by force is at least partially relapsed into barbarism. The community outside may not know whether the right to free inquiry is essential to science, but it knows that there is no honesty in voting yourself a paid holiday and calling it an act of conscience. The cab driver who understands the nexus linking his driving and his

[14] *Ramparts*, July 1972, pp. 24–25.

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income looks at an academic moratorium and wonders what sort of confidence-men inhabit the groves of academe. The welder, accustomed to carrying on his political activity after hours, looks with disgust at the boondoggle called the "Princeton Plan." He sees here a community of aristocrats who consider their political activity ever so much more valuable than that of ordinary mechanics.

Such abuses must be corrected if the academy is to regain the respect and confidence of the community on which it depends. The academy must free itself of enslavement by ideological license. Freedom is not attained in the absence of constraint but through the internal acceptance of those responsible limits on which the fulfilment of freedom depends. If the faculty cannot correct themselves, they must not be surprised to find interference from without—through gross neglect or direct intervention. The public at large may yet demand a great and perhaps tragic moment out of Dostoevsky, when all academics, like Raskolnikov, are forced to kneel at the crossroads and kiss the ground.

A Familiar Ghost Story

i

Over our heads wrapped in mufflers
your mother, my father
hover, small and clear, in the sky
like ancient stars.
They barter our hearts.

ii

Late winters by the stove
my father read, your mother sewed.
Their figures stick in the mind
outlined
like frost on windows
filling with snow.

iii

You think of her
this afternoon, watching me mend
woollen socks she once knit,
as I feel him stir
across the sunlit room
filling with shadows
where you sit.

iv

Car beams and stars are merging
over dark bed posts.
In these shafts across our ceiling
ghost parents float.
They meet
crossing over.
As the light grows
we can see each other.

Florence Elon

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John Mole

The Roman Woman

1

This boy has broken from his friends, a busy
party taking notes, to be alone with her—
or with himself, my being here before him.

So we look down through the glass.
Her date's uncertain, vaguely Roman,
part of all these coins and brilliant tiles.

He watches her as if for movement.
Giving nothing back but silence
she invites me;—cold, unfleshed,

the net we cast around this child
is ruthless. Not a gladiator fighting
for his life could be more sudden or more cruel.

2

Heartless, her ribs maintain
their brittle latticing. Such architecture
lets a partial sunlight through

to keep it darkly. Bones
cast from the feast are cast
in more perpetual shapes like this

and hint at some design I celebrate
by being here, by gazing
back, conspicuously dressed.

A cold exchange; her bright reflection
in the lake for glass to closet her.
That promise to each lover was a fiction.

3

The child's face boldly peering in
imposes on her so she wears
his curious features like a patch of shroud.

The room grows dark around him;
such a concentration holds him now—
that perfect skull and those extended fingers.

He is not mine. I move away
past different curios, remembering
a cry that called me once past midnight

to my son's cot and the skeletal white bars
he clutched at, weeping there, as if
a heart had found its place and woken.

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Pictures From an Exhibition

1
Pre-Raphaelite armour
was a kind of greed,
they put it on
out of pure need,

but they took it off
to cross the road,
as if their faces
had been in woad.

2
I mean, for money,
they painted old:
sister and friend
in pernicious gold.

Only no one saw,
and no one knew
that Christina, the Virgin,
was the Mistress, too.

Or, if they did
they didn't care:
satisfactory style
was in golden hair.

3
There are lessons in this
if you want to learn:
about how the Past
is a way to earn,

or how nobility
sinks in grief
when the sexual need
is the one in chief.

So the girl in the grave
and the friend's wife
join hands in the photographs
drawn from the life.

4
It was all they had,
their remarkable time:
buttering the future
with a dab of rhyme.

Rossetti, dear Rossetti,
I love your work
but you were really
a bit of a jerk.

George MacBeth

A perspex block - about 2" diameter

One of those shores unvisited by the dead;
Unhaunted, rather, by that part of us
We cling to more than to our memories
Of how that beach once was, of what a field
Lay there, where glazed pipes and cables now lurk under
Forecourts to garaged houses—
Anaesthetised by vacuum to the movements
That twist an object and prevent the beam
(Skilled hand to organ, image to image, the same)
Illuminating what we have our mind on—
This little seabed made real by the glass
Sealed from all sustenance, from even what a germ can live on,
One tiny crab, three bits of grit, one leaf,
Is purely what it seems to the outward eye:
A free and calmly watered thriving shore
Unmystified by anything that's actual.

Jenny Joseph

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NOTES & TOPICS

Second Thoughts on a Paradise Lost

By John Passmore

IN OUR FRENETIC CENTURY, a social movement can come to birth, flourish, die, all within a decade. Early in 1970, when I completed my book *The Perfectibility of Man*, the new mysticism was still, to all appearances, as vigorous as its nature permitted. Published in that same year, Charles Reich's *The Greening of America* was an eloquent and influential apologia for its ideals.

> "There is [Reich wrote] a revolution coming. . . . It will not require violence to succeed. . . . It promises a higher reason, a more human community and a new and liberated individual. . . . This is the revolution of the new generation."[1]

But there were already straws to show that the wind was blowing in a very different direction. The "flower children" were growing up into the gun kids.

Play, I have suggested, readily takes the form of mindless violence. That is precisely what happened. New slogans began to appear on the walls:

> "Love is violence."
> "Crime is the highest form of sensuality."[2]

The London satirical journal *Oz* had been one of the warmest supporters of the "flower people." In an editorial written towards the end of 1970, its Editor, Richard Neville, made clear his disillusionment with the new mysticism. Many of its former adherents, Neville told us, have "gone straight"—sickened by the intolerance, the intellectual emptiness, the dishonesty, the élitism, the subservience to fashion, the commercialism which "the Movement" had come to display—and which, I have argued, were from the beginning inherent in it. For antinomianism is the perpetual temptation of perfectibilism. And in many respects the new mysticism did no more than carry to its furthest extreme the commercial ideals of the consumer's society.

"The attempt to construct a society wholly based on 'play' and 'community'", so I also suggested, "leads either to total collapse or to tyranny. If not the God Dionysus, then an earthly and less amiable surrogate has to sustain it." Charles Manson, the classic Dionysian tyrant, was a living demonstration of that ugly truth.[3] In some quarters, Manson was hero-worshipped—this the gentler enthusiasts could not endure.

AT A SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT LEVEL, there was a growing realisation that the attitude of mind expressed in the Diggers' manifesto of 1966—"Beware of leaders, heroes, organisers"—left the new mystics wide open to commercial exploitation. Unorganised and leaderless they were readily manipulated.

That undisciplined utterance, undisciplined art, undisciplined political activity—not to mention the undisciplined agriculture of the communes—is in the long run uncreative and boring; that sexual promiscuity does not spread love; that a language impoverished in the name of "sincerity" is incapable of communicating anything of any importance; that care without a willingness to assume responsibility is an empty gesture; that drug-taking is not a short-cut to moral and intellectual regeneration—these were judgments which the young could no longer plausibly dismiss as the moralistic prejudices of dourly respectable elders. Experience dismally bore them out, often enough in the lives of their elder brothers, their elder sisters.[4]

ESPECIALLY IN THE UNITED STATES, opposition to the Viet Nam War (and to the conscription it entailed) for a time disguised the essential aimlessness of the "flower children" and misleadingly associated them with a political activism which was in fact essentially alien to their ideals. The War once over (at least so far as the United States was concerned), it was no longer possible to disguise the hollowness of perfectibilist pretensions, the low level—morally and intellectually—of the mode of life which the new mysticism in

JOHN PASSMORE's *article "Removing the Rubbish" appeared in the April* ENCOUNTER. *His latest book, "Man's Responsibility for Nature" (as well as his earlier "The Perfectibility of Man"), was published by Duckworth (London). He is Professor of Philosophy at the Australian National University in Canberra.*

[1] Charles Reich, *The Greening of America* (1970), p.11. See Henry Fairlie's critique in ENCOUNTER, August 1971, pp. 3–13.

[2] This detail and much of what follows are based on the collection of ephemera included in P. Stansill and D. Z. Mairowitz: *Bamn* (Penguin, 1971). "*Bamn*", it is worth noting, is an acronym for "By any means necessary."

[3] See R. C. Zaehner, "The Wickedness of Evil", ENCOUNTER, April 1974, pp. 50–58.

[4] Compare on these themes Clifford Adelman, *Generations: A Collage on Youth-cult* (New York, 1972; Penguin, 1973).

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practice engendered. Women, too, began to realise that the new mysticism left to them, as I have already suggested, no role but that of hangers-on. "Good-bye", wrote one Women's Liberationist (Robin Morgan), "to Hip Culture and the so-called Sexual Revolution which has functioned towards women's freedom as did the [American] Reconstruction towards former slaves —reinstituted oppression by other names. . . ." Women's liberation took different, more political, paths.

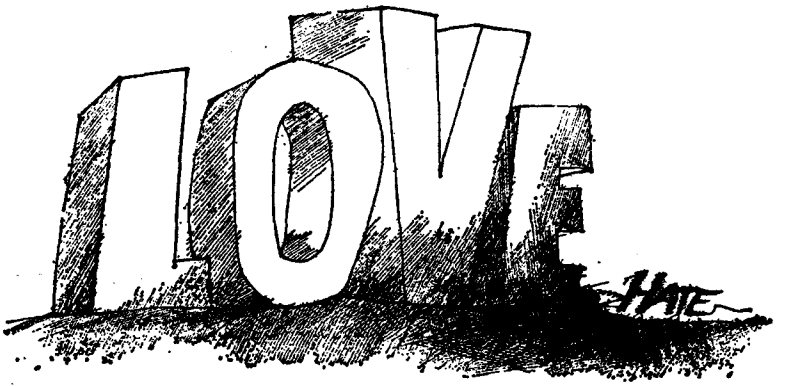
More generally, indeed, that is what has happened: a diffuse perfectibilism has been replaced by specific causes. Many of these causes, it is true, had already been espoused by the Amsterdam "Provos" in their manifestos of 1966. In those manifestos the Provos identified themselves with "consumer consciousness", better public transport, action against pollution, urban preservation. But, fed from a variety of sources, many of them reformist rather than perfectibilist, such causes now have an independent life as centres of enthusiasm—if sometimes, no doubt, in a form which rather too vividly recalls the typical perfectibilist longing for a simple society, a simple, unblemished world of nature.[5]

THE NEW MYSTICISM has left behind it a legacy of drug-dependent lives and disrupted universities. With their bourgeois Philistine demand for "relevance", the young rebels have helped to destroy one of the few bastions against the "throw-away" ideals of a consumer's society. Their movement has weakened the scientific spirit, encouraged the spread of occultism, artistic exhibitionism, and almost every form of charlatanism. But at the same time it has helped to shake Western society out of its complacent assumption that the production of more and more consumer goods was the obvious and the only way of bringing contentment to the human spirit. To that degree it prepared the way for a more ready acceptance of the need for changes in our way of life, for new "causes." There are some signs, however, that such humdrum causes no longer arouse the passions of the young. Disillusioned by the effects of perfectibilism, they often subside into a cynical, self-centred careerism—the opposite extreme from perfectibilism. Such swings of feeling are by no means unprecedented in human history.

Are new forms of perfectibilism now arising? We have witnessed, certainly, a Jesus Cult, very reminiscent (allowing for its brash modernism) of the 14th-century "imitation of Christ." It, too, has had its theatrical symbols; in their rather different ways, *Godspell* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* were its substitutes for *Hair*. But it looks to be the last fling of the youth movement, a subcraze, rather than the first signs of a new Christian perfectibilism. At least in part, it flowed from a disillusionment with the religions of the East and the commercialised gurus they nowadays generate. If religion revives, one can expect, given the present state of feeling, that it will take a form at once more occult and more guilt-ridden than the Christianity the "Jesus freaks" espoused.

ANARCHIST PERFECTIBILISM is by no means dead. It still bears occasional witness to the way in which any attempt to rise above the inevitable compromises of politics issues in violence, a violence excused (in the traditional manner) as a necessary step on the path towards the realisation of a higher form of community but obviously enjoyed by its votaries for its own sake, as the epitome of irresponsibility. Recently, however, more nationalistic forms of terrorism, not perfectibilist in type, have attracted the attention of the violence-lovers. I refer to simple assault and murder—sometimes romanticised as an

[5] I have developed these points in more detail in *Man's Responsibility for Nature* (1974) and in "The Revolt against Science", *Search*, Nov.–Dec. 1972, pp. 415–22.



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attack on property, sometimes cynically excused as no more than what "Big Business" or the state does daily, often a desperate by-product of drug-addiction.

"Marxist humanism" is increasingly influential. Its way is easier, now that it has entirely dissociated itself from Bolshevik Russia and looks warily even at Mao's China. The now popular catch-cry "Socialism has never been tried" oddly, but not accidentally, echoes a familiar defence of Christianity. But it, too, is only marginally perfectibilist.

WHAT CAN ONE PREDICT about the future? This much quite safely: there will always be men and women who are dissatisfied with themselves, their social institutions, their fellows. Some of them will try to reduce their level of dissatisfaction by fighting for reforms. But there will be others whose dissatisfaction runs deeper—not with this or that particular personal or social defect but with the very existence of dissatisfaction. Their dissatisfaction, in other words, is with the human condition as such; with its responsibilities, its uncertainties, its insecurity, its toil and its troubles. The human condition—or sometimes, they will rather say, human society—is so corrupted that no reform can do more than temporarily disguise, cosmetically, its fundamental rottenness. Those who see the world thus will take the perfectibilist way, whether the way that leads to personal mysticism or the way that leads to social revolution.

Some of them will write books. In a very general sense of the word, they are the "theologians" of perfectibilism. On these theologians the intellectual historian inevitably concentrates—but quite unintellectual men and women are no less subject to perfectibilist impulses. They will not read the theologians. Few Christians have read Clement or Basil. Few of those who formed communes, or sought to substitute feeling for form, had read Herbert Marcuse or Norman O. Brown. The theologians, nevertheless, give shape to their inchoate ideals. And in a watered-down form, as journalism or as popular preaching, the theologian's concepts will provide them with a language. Some of the perfectibilists will be intensely sincere. By its very nature, however, their perfectibilism will lend shelter, also, to the lazy, the incompetent, and the psychopathic.

WE CAN, I THINK, make these very general predictions with confidence. We can expect to find, too—this has been one of my themes—that no perfectibilist movement will be wholly new. It will ring the changes on familiar teachings. But what changes it will ring, where, when and how it will arise, none of us can anticipate. I dare hope only this: that the story I have told will not be entirely irrelevant to an understanding of its nature and its origins.

How Much Time Left for Parliamentary Democracy?

London Commentary — By JOHN P. MACKINTOSH

WE ARE IN a first-class muddle about our politicians, about the kind of people we want and the way they ought to behave. The old 19th-century view was clear. Politics was about the running of the country. Every responsible person ought to have his opinion, and those with strong views, a gift for leadership, and reasonable ability ought to be ready to enter public life; to do so was both an honour and a duty. No one thought that politicians should give up their estates, directorships, or other interests; MPs had to have outside means and their political activities were an addition to these normal pursuits. Also, this meant that they brought a variety of experience to Parliament and had an independent existence on which they could fall back when they left the House.

The alternative view, perhaps more appropriate today, would be that politics is a full-time occupation in which people must spend a considerable period to acquire the appropriate expertise. If this is the case, then they cannot hold outside jobs and must be paid accordingly. There is the subordinate question as to whether it would be best for men and women to embark deliberately on such a career at an early stage and remain in it most of their lives, as one would in medicine or in academic life, or whether they should come in later in some cases, having

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achieved a reasonable degree of seniority in another occupation, and then put in a more limited period in the House.

It is important to be clear which is the most desirable pattern as, if politics is to be a career stretching from early adult life to retirement, then this affects the pay structure, places greater importance on the possibility of transferring from local to national politics and means that there must be some security for those who are defeated or who retire. If, on the other hand, a measure of inflow and outflow is required, then MPs must be as well paid as those in the occupations from which they are to come (assuming that politics, being full-time, these outside jobs must be abandoned) and their opportunities to return to their previous occupations must be safeguarded.

PART OF THE ANSWER to these questions depends on the kind of work politicians are supposed to do. If their task is to give the reactions to national problems of those engaged mainly in other pursuits, then the part-time nature of the job can be accepted. This is the old tradition, and it still influences the organisation of the House. It is why there is no entitlement to an office, no provision for a full-time secretary or a separate telephone; and why men such as Enoch Powell still regard these appurtenances as unnecessary and indeed wrong. The art of politics, on this theory, is the expression of opinion on the great issues of the day, and the man who succeeds is the man who strikes a sympathetic chord in the country and thus wins mass support. According to this view, the MP should not contemplate acting as a local welfare officer or ombudsman. Clement Attlee, for example, used to be adamant that there were local councillors to do this work (he had been in local government himself); and for other matters redress is through the courts. Again, this older approach still dominates our institutional arrangements. The MP has no special position or authority in dealing with the affairs of his constituency. Any letters he may write to the local councils have no greater legal force than those sent by any other citizen, and if the MP receives a reply when he writes about other people's affairs, this is simply an act of courtesy. He could well be told to mind his own business.

On the other hand, constituencies are becoming less and less interested in what their MP says on national questions. Electors seem to think this is the task of the handful of leaders who appear regularly on television. Perhaps the electors despair of our politicians solving national problems and feel that talking about international affairs is largely pointless when Britain's role in world affairs is greatly diminished. But they do increasingly expect the MP to look into and take action about local issues.

The Liberals have built this into a theory called "the Politics of Involvement" or "Community Politics"; but it is practised by an increasing number of MPs of all parties. According to this, the MP does not only hold "surgeries" every Saturday but he joins and takes part in neighbourhood councils and tenants' associations. He sets out to involve people in working with him and with the local councillors in applying pressure on central and local government over all kinds of issues, particularly those concerned with planning and local amenities.

All this takes an inordinate amount of time and energy. It is much more easily practised by prospective candidates than by those actually elected (which is why the Liberals have done most to develop the idea). But if this approach spreads, then the MP must have a properly staffed office both in his constituency and in the House. At present the Palace of Westminster—for such it is—virtually shuts during the recesses and the MP may find himself locked out of his office, if he is lucky enough to have one in the first place. Mrs Marcia Williams, secretary to Harold Wilson and now Lady Falkender, was once denied access to his office—he was then Leader of the Opposition—on the grounds that during the recess MPs and their staff had no right of entry.

In a curious way, the refusal to provide for a staff (each MP can claim £1,000 a year towards the cost of a secretary) puts a premium on retaining an outside source of income so that the MP can pay for proper services out of his own pocket. In the 1960s the two MPs who were reputed to do most for their constituencies were Harold Lever and Gerald Nabarro, both of whom were very wealthy men who could afford an adequate staff.

IN ADDITION TO THIS REFUSAL to consider and be clear about the nature of a politician's work, there is a total muddle as to whether the practice of politics is in itself reasonable and desirable. In the 19th century the word "politician" denoted an activity but had no derogatory overtones. Some men went into the House and, whatever their motives, it was accepted that to want to do so was a laudable ambition. Those outside the House who were well-known and successful were often prepared to be identified with one of the political parties. Indeed, W. S. Gilbert could satirise the position by saying

> *I often think it's comical,*
> *How Nature always does contrive,*
> *That every boy and every gal*
> *That's born into the world alive*
> *Is either a little Liberal*
> *Or else a little Conservative.*

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But in recent years, the idea has crept in that to be committed politically means surrendering part of one's independence and judgment; that it necessarily involves the support of some untenable propositions and thus builds an element of dishonesty into all those who are associated with a party. The curious aspect of this is that being opinionated, even in extreme forms, is no handicap or evidence of any failing, but to be an avowed member of a political party, however mild and middle-of-the-road one's opinions may be, is held to be a disability.

In part, obviously, politicians have contributed to this. Those who regularly lambaste their opponents for pursuing policies they had themselves been following only a few months before; those who never admit any mistakes; those who constantly claim more credit than they can possibly deserve—all, no doubt, help earn this reputation for them and their profession. Also, politicians often suspect their fellow-practitioners just as much as the outside public do. They may prefer to confer with civil servants and trust the advice they get from this source more than the opinions of party colleagues simply because they think that civil servants are in some sense objective or independent. When I was a Professor of Politics in Scotland, I tried to start a centre of local government studies. Some time later, in the House of Commons, I met the minister charged with local government reform heading for my old university to consult "a professor who has shown some interest in the subject." On discovering that the professor was me, he abandoned both the trip and the consultation.

BUT IF POLITICIANS are partly to blame for this state of affairs, the attitude of the public makes the situation worse. To be identified with a party is held to imply not only a suspect judgment but an inherent tendency to put across tendentious propaganda and to seize illegitimate advantages. It is also assumed that no one identified with one party could work loyally and wholeheartedly with someone identified with another party. Thus, the civil service must "stay out of politics" rather as one advises a child on a wet day to keep out of the puddles. There is no objection to a civil servant having strong views or expressing them; he just has to avoid the label of a party.

A radio or television newscaster or interviewer can be opinionated—but, again, he must avoid identification. The ground rules of the Independent Broadcasting Authority require the resignation of any such person if he announces party membership or candidature. This rule was questioned on the then ITA Advisory Council in the late 1960s. It was pointed out that what mattered was evident and offensive bias and this could exist without the person concerned ever having any party connections. On the other hand, a man whose approach was respected on all sides, who then became an avowed party member, or an adopted party candidate, and was still as fair and reasonable as before, had committed no crime and should be allowed to retain his job. This view was actually accepted by the Council; but it was rejected by the ITA on the grounds, as they put it, that TV commentators must be "like Caesar's wife, above reproach."

ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN in the House of Commons and then leaves finds out that he must go through a cleansing ritual, like a Mohammedan who has had sexual relations with an infidel, or at least a period in quarantine before he is readmitted to normal life. Interviewing boards, trying to be helpful, say that "no doubt you had to get this desire to take part in politics out of your system but we assume that this episode is now behind you. . . ." As the period of active political life recedes, one slowly qualifies once again as an independent critic and commentator "safe" enough to be used on the media. Indeed, one may get so far as to be consulted again as "an expert" by one's former colleagues. After a few years—who knows?—one may even be appointed to a Royal Commission set up to consider some topic that is too important to be left to those biased partisan fellows, the regular politicians.

In the institutionalisation of all this, there are first the exclusions by law or professional rule. Civil servants and local government officials above certain levels must play no overt part in politics. School teachers may not stand for local authorities which control education; and, indeed, no one can be elected to a council if he holds a paid office under that council. Similarly, no civil servant or member of the armed forces (in peacetime) can be elected to the House and, in practice, they have to resign if they become candidates. Many other occupations apply the same rules which not only exclude people from playing a part in politics but, if they persist with this folly, drive them into subterfuges. It leads the would-be politician to conceal his candidature as its announcement would mean resignation and unemployment from that moment till an election which could be two or three years off and which he might not win.

CONTRAST THIS APPROACH with that adopted in Germany since the War where civil servants can be active in politics and may stand for parliament. If they do so, their posts, with

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the appropriate levels of promotion and superannuation, are held open for them as long as they serve in the *Bundestag*. And the same rules are enforced outside the civil service, so that teaching posts are also kept open for those elected. The general approach is to encourage an interest in politics by making it easy and safe for people to stand for elective office, those doing so being assured that this will in no way be regarded as a disqualification from returning to their previous careers. The result has not led to any disintegration of the German administrative machine or to difficulties between Civil Servants and Ministers, but it has meant an increase in the level of expertise in the *Bundestag* and has facilitated the movement of men as brilliant as Ralf Dahrendorf into politics, out into the European Commission, and then back into academic life.

THE MOST EXTREME EXAMPLE of the current confusion about the role of politicians has come up over the current demand for a register of MPs' interests. In the first place, the demand grossly overestimates the influence of members. The House of Commons has no executive functions; it cannot award contracts or decide in favour of one group of interests as opposed to another. In over 90% of votes, the "party line" covers all MPs. Parties are thinking about the public's responses and the next election, not about making money for one or two out of the 635 members. If one considers the cases in which private MPs can have some influence, they fall into a tiny handful of categories.

First, there is the occasional private MP's Bill on issues like Abortion, Capital Punishment, etc, where the parties find it too difficult to impose a party line on all their members. Then there is the question of a controversy within a party as to its line on a particular controversial question. Should the Conservatives come down in favour of commercial radio or not? Should the Labour Party decide in favour of reform of the liquor licensing laws or not? Finally, there are the rare great issues which cut so deep that MPs are prepared to break ranks, the best recent example being the vote (on 28 October 1971) about British membership of the Common Market. Of these, the first and third are so much matters of conscience and are so much issues on which the MP will be called in question by his constituents that there is not the smallest chance of financial inducements having any effect.

In the interim category, deciding the line to be taken by a party on smallish issues over which there is some sympathy but no clear-cut position, it is worth those outside interests retaining the services of one or more MPs, to put their "point of view." This is particularly true of taxation arrangements where governments introduce Finance Bills without prior consultation (to prevent forestalling) and are then prepared to make adjustments, given effective presentation of their case, during the committee stage of the Finance Bill. For these purposes, a number of outside interests pay one or two MPs retainers and brief them—but, compared with legislatures such as the U.S. Congress where the members have real power, this is of tiny significance. Also, there is a strong case that these views should be represented, and they will only gain the day if they have some merit; for if the party spokesmen apply the whip against them, they are doomed.

THERE ARE ONE OR TWO other motives for giving some small retainer to an MP. One is simply a little prestige gained from having one's annual dinner at the House of Commons or having someone to take distinguished foreign guests around the House. The ironic thing about these various motives for retaining MPs is that they are worth so little that the sums paid are trivial—*viz.*, the £250 recently mentioned in the T. Dan Smith case. The easiest way of stopping the whole thing is not to ask for a register of interests but to pay MPs properly and to prohibit retainers. The simple fact is that on £4,500 a year now, the MP who has two homes to keep and, if he is involved in constituency work, a secretary to "top up" out of his own pocket, is so hard-up that he is keen to snatch at every £250 a year that passes under his nose. I repeat: proper pay (say the same as a GP, an Assistant Under-Secretary, or a Professor) plus the government providing a proper office in Westminster and in his constituency, and all MPs would be delighted to agree to a total prohibition on any payments from outside interests.

The most flagrant example of the present muddle arises not even in the case of private MPs but over the official Opposition. They receive no financial help apart from special payments to the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Whip. The original theory of the British system was that, in opposition, a party had time to reconsider its position, to work out new policies, and thus come back to the struggle for power revived and re-equipped.

In practice, the very opposite happens. In Government, ministers are relatively well-paid and very well served for advice and assistance. Out of office, they fall back to the position of private members with the added handicap that so-called Shadow Ministers have no help and no extra resources but a much greater burden. As a result, they become more divorced from the facts, they learn less, and parties in opposition

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tend to fall back on the more primitive aspects of their original ideologies and to produce unrealistic schemes which are only discarded after some period in office.

A GOOD EXAMPLE was the contrast between June and July 1970. In June, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food (on a salary of £13,000 a year) had a large and expert staff to brief him on the vast range of complex problems falling under his charge. A month later, he was the Shadow Minister down to £4,500 a year with no staff and a marginal constituency on his hands. Yet he was supposed to rise in the House and put constructive questions and counter-proposals to the Minister. Such a person might be "tempted", though not by money. But, suppose a fertiliser company offered to pay for the services of one researcher for him, or suppose the National Farmers' Union offered him simply some expert opinion on difficult points? As it was, the person concerned had to go back to work privately as a barrister to pay for his constituency secretary and to get himself a little help in his Shadow duties. Is this work as a barrister to be registered as a corrupting influence, a derogation from his purity as an MP?

The whole Labour Opposition between 1970 and 1974 was serviced by a tiny handful of research assistants paid for, if you please, by the Rowntree Trust. It is to be hoped that no one suggested this foundation money from the confectioners influenced the Opposition's attitude to V.A.T. on cocoa and chocolate. This is yet another example of our clarity of thought a hundred years ago—and our confusion now. Then we were clear that what mattered in politics was opinions, not money. As a result, the amount that could be spent on an election in each constituency was limited to a small sum per elector. This remains the law today long after elections have ceased to be determined constituency by constituency and what matters, in terms of money, is the *national* campaign. But no limits are set on expenditure at *this* level—so that money now does have an influence. Industry subscribes heavily to the Conservative Party (though many industrialists dislike the process) while the Labour Party is saddled with a massive obligation to the trade unions.

Here again, the Germans thought the position through after the War and set up a publicly-financed fund to pay for the central machines and campaigns of the political parties, allowing them to draw out of the total in proportion to the votes they obtained at the last general election. As no one has been prepared to think through the position in Britain, we continue with 19th-century rules which are supposed to reduce the influence of moneyed interests but actually produce the opposite effect.

ALL IN ALL, the present situation induces one to despair. The only hope is if the nation realises that so much of its thinking is indeed muddled and so many of its institutions and rules are in fact hopelessly antiquated. Will it ever be ready to take a grip on itself, in terms of our industrial, social or political organisation and recast the system in the light of first principles? Alas, the problem is that these principles also need to be thought through. This could be a lengthy process. Is there so much time left for parliamentary democracy?

The New Diplomacy of Movement

International Commentary—By HANS J. MORGENTHAU

COMPARING today's world politics with what it was but five years ago, one is impressed both by the drastic changes which have obviously occurred, and by the continuities which have survived these changes. One is furthermore struck by the degree to which many of these changes were unplanned and even unanticipated by the most powerful nations. It must also be noted that the political world of today is much less manageable—and, hence, much more dangerous—than the world which, roughly speaking, came to an end with Richard M. Nixon's accession to power.

The configuration into which the political world congealed in the aftermath of the Second World War was relatively simple and fairly easily managed—two power-blocs, defined in ideological terms and rigidly grouped around two super-powers which restrained each other through

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the assurance of mutual atomic destruction (and which competed rather harmlessly and ineffectually for the allegiance of the nations of the so-called Third World, that is, those who had not joined one or the other of the power blocs). The main issue that pitted the two power blocs against each other was the territorial settlement of the Second World War, especially in Central Europe; and it was from that unresolved issue that the Cold War arose.

The Cold War was virtually liquidated by the *Ostpolitik* of the Federal Republic of Germany, ratified in the treaties of 1970 and 1972 which recognised the territorial status quo in Central Europe and renounced the claim of the "Hallstein Doctrine" that the Federal Republic was the sole representative of all Germany, East and West, one day to be united under its auspices. That liquidation was but virtually (that is, not quite) complete for two reasons; one existential, the other a direct descendant of the central issue of the Cold War. No agreement, however generously worded and faithfully executed, can dispose of the fact that West Berlin is an enclave surrounded by the territory of a hostile state. That existential condition gives that state a power for good or ill which the Western nations cannot match. It is this condition which can become, especially in conjunction with wider issues, a source of conflict after the model of past Berlin crises.

On the other hand, while the Federal Republic has given up the unrealistic positions of the Cold War, it still holds to the proposition that Germany East and West forms one nation—"one nation in two states"—to be united one day, however remote. Hence the deadlock at the Geneva Conference on European Security over the wording of the recognition of the territorial status quo in Central Europe. The Soviet bloc wants the borders to be declared "irrevocable"—while the Western nations want the door to be kept open for peaceful change.

This genuine (however qualified) *détente* within the area from which the Cold War arose has been accompanied and strengthened by the ideological decontamination of East-West relations. These relations are no longer conceived by the governments concerned as a confrontation between two incompatible philosophies and "ways of life", which can only end in the world-wide victory of one or the other. Reading, for instance, Mr Nixon's annual report to Congress on the "state of the world", one is struck by the almost complete absence of any reference to the world-wide aspirations of Communism. What remains of ideological commitments (for instance, with regard to Viet Nam and Cuba) results from considerations of prestige and of domestic politics rather than from genuine conviction. A marked decline, rather than almost complete absence, characterises Soviet ideological polemics against the evils of Western capitalism and Imperialism.

THIS IDEOLOGICAL DISARMAMENT is not just a matter of rhetoric but touches the very core of the relations between East and West. The rigidity of alignments which was characteristic of the Cold War was a function not only of the intractability of substantive political issues but also of the irreconcilable nature of the ideological positions. The liberation of foreign policy from its ideological orientation has cleared the road to the new diplomacy of movement which in our period of history has replaced the rigidities of the Cold War.

THE NEW DIPLOMACY offers the politically active nations new opportunities and confronts them with new risks—and more often than not one nation's opportunity turns out to be another nation's risk. Thus the settlement of old issues gives rise to new ones, and advantage will accrue to the nation that recognises the newness of the new issues and chooses the policies appropriate to them. Europe and, more particularly, the disarray of the Atlantic alliance provide empirical illustration of these general propositions.

The tendencies towards disintegration within the Atlantic alliance are, of course, of long standing. (I wrote as far back as 1958 an article entitled "The Crisis of the Atlantic Alliance.") Doubts about the reliability of the American nuclear deterrent, the fading of the perception of the Soviet military threat, the economic revival of Western Europe, and divergent national interests are all responsible for them. I made in the early 1960s a survey of the international issues confronting the members of the Alliance and did not find a single one on which all the allies saw eye to eye. These tendencies have been transformed into an acute crisis by the rhetoric of "partnership" indulged in by the American and Soviet leaders; by the unilateralism of American political, military, and economic policies, many of them patently unwise; by the suspicions of the nations of Western Europe; and by the openly anti-American policies of one of them. The leadership of and close cooperation with the United States —accepted 25 years ago not as a matter of choice but as the condition of survival—are now widely experienced on both sides of the Atlantic as a burden to be lightened by the unilateral pursuit of particular national interests.

In the measure that the cohesion of the Atlantic alliance is loosened and American power and influence within it decline, the power and influence of the Soviet Union are likely to loom larger in the affairs of Western Europe. The

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Soviet Union, although no longer perceived as the kind of threat it was during the Cold War, still is objectively the colossus bestriding the Eurasian land mass, against whom a viable European balance of power can be maintained only through the permanent military presence in Europe of the United States cooperating with the nations of Western Europe. In other words, the Atlantic Alliance has been the instrument through which the United States and the nations of Western Europe first restored and then maintained the European balance of power.

The decline of American power and influence, therefore, tilts the balance of power in favour of the Soviet Union and, in consequence, increases the insecurity of the nations of Western Europe. These nations—ambivalent towards the United States, whose support they need but resent—may then perceive themselves as having been abandoned by the United States and having to face alone the Soviet Union, unchallengeable in its military power. It is this state of mind which would give the Soviet Union its long-sought-after opportunity to stabilise what it calls "European" security, which is in truth a euphemism for its own. Seen from the vantage point of the Kremlin, European security requires the reduction, if not the elimination, of American power on the Continent, the consequent emasculation of NATO, and the consequent isolation of the Federal Republic of Germany. The nations of Western Europe, isolated from each other and from the United States, would then no longer be able to maintain a viable balance of power *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union and would have to accommodate themselves to the Soviet hegemony over the Eurasian land mass.

THIS ACCOMMODATION—were the Federal Republic of Germany to join in it—would signify a drastic change in the distribution of world power. The Western orientation of the Federal Republic has been derived from calculations of comparative political, military, and economic advantage. That orientation has not remained unchallenged from within the *Bundesrepublik*, even while rational calculation argued powerfully in its favour. If the development I have indicated above were to come to pass, rational arguments could indeed support an Eastern orientation. Traditionally fearful of the "Russian bear," a West Germany deprived of assured American protection would have to move into a neutral, if not friendly, political and military position *vis-à-vis* its towering neighbour to the East. That position would be greatly strengthened by the complementary relationship of the West German and Soviet economies. The Soviet Union has obviously decided to supplement its own efforts at industrial modernisation with a massive influx of Western technology. The Federal Republic is one of the most highly developed industrial nations, dependent on large-scale exports for its prosperity. Once the political, military, and economic ties among the Western European nations and between them and the United States are loosened, the Soviet Union could offer a profitable alternative.

SUCH A DEVELOPMENT would also greatly relieve the anxieties over the Chinese threat which, at the very least in the short run, have influenced the Soviet stance in world politics. The so-called policy of *détente vis-à-vis* the United States owes its existence not only to economic considerations and the desire to destroy the Atlantic alliance as the foundation-stone of the European balance of power, but also (and foremost) to the fear of being caught in a confrontation, if not a war, at both the Eastern and Western frontiers of the Soviet Union. In the measure that the Soviet Union has become convinced that reconciliation with China is impossible—and, in consequence, war with China must be considered to have become possible if not probable—it must seek to relieve the pressure which the Atlantic alliance through the policy of "Containment" has exerted upon the Western frontiers of the Soviet empire.

In that search, the new American policy towards China presents both an opportunity and a risk. It hardly needs to be pointed out again that the normalisation of relations between the United States and China was 20 years overdue when the first steps toward it were taken in 1971. These steps mean little for the bilateral relations between the United States and China as long as the United States continues to recognise the Government of Taiwan and to stress in word and deed the validity of its commitment to that government. But they mean a great deal for the new three-cornered relations among the United States, China, and the Soviet Union. The United States enjoys a freedom of manoeuvre between the two other powers, which allows it to take advantage of the implacable hostility between them. Both must compete for American support against each other, or at least prevent American support from going to the other side. These interests dictate within rather narrow limits self-restraint in the pursuit of policies of which the United States might disapprove (*viz.*, military support of North Viet Nam and of "wars of national liberation" in general), and readiness for accommodation, again within rather narrow limits, to American preferences. The United States, in turn, while it has by no means the

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freedom of action Great Britain enjoyed from Henry VIII to Sir Edward Grey as the "holder" of the European balance of power, is at liberty to make at least small changes in its position between the two other powers in order to give an incentive to their pursuit of policies favourable to its interests.

CHINA, however, is the country that has benefited most from this budding normalisation of relations. It has done so in two major respects. Its admission to the family of nations and, in particular, to the United Nations, has given it the opportunity to assume the leadership of the so-called "Third World of underdeveloped nations" against the two super-powers. While since 1917 the Soviet Union has identified itself with "the world revolution of the have-nots", both on the national and class level, against Imperialism, China puts the two super-powers into the same leaking imperialist boat and takes over the traditional position which (at least in Chinese rhetoric) the Soviet Union has vacated.

Furthermore, the American initiative towards China has freed Japan from the restraints in its dealings with China, which the close coordination of its foreign policies with those of the United States had imposed upon it. While Japan could not afford to strike out on its own in normalising its relations with China, once the United States started to do so, Japan followed suit. Weighing the potentialities of this new relationship between Japan and China, one can register complementary interests not dissimilar to those I noted as a potential basis of closer West German-Soviet ties. Japan is a highly developed modern industrial nation, which must export on a large scale in order to live. China presents an immense underdeveloped market for industrial machinery and products. In combination, they could indeed dominate Asia economically, politically, and militarily. Such a combination would resemble the "Asian Co-prosperity Sphere" which Japan tried in vain to establish by way of conquest and which would now be based upon the mutual recognition of complementary interests.

The new mobility Japan enjoys as a by-product of the American initiative is not limited to its relations with China. As the United States can now manoeuvre within narrow limits between the Soviet Union and China, so can Japan. For the Soviet need of foreign participation in industrial and technological development is a standing invitation to Japan as it is to West Germany.

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relations through the intermediary of small powers. The most striking example is the Middle East. Until the October war of 1973, the Arab nations of the Middle East were lined up against Israel, each side supplied and supported by one of the super-powers. The rigidity of that alignment has now made way for an unprecedented flexibility of American policy, supplying and supporting not only Israel but also Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, with a readiness to do the same for Syria, provided the latter is receptive. That policy obviously aims at the limitation, if not expulsion, of Soviet power and influence in the Middle East, just as Soviet policy seeks the limitation, if not expulsion, of American power and influence in Western Europe. If the Soviet Union emerged from such a change as the predominant power in all of Europe, so would the United States in the Middle East.

These opportunities for diplomatic manoeuvre were once the main stakes of foreign policy. Their judicious use was once the main instrument, short of war, by which nations tried to achieve their ends. Their usefulness has by no means been eliminated altogether; for it is still necessary for nations to compete for power and other advantages, to accommodate and reconcile divergent interests, to settle conflicts peacefully. But that usefulness has been qualified by two factors which have no precedent in recorded history: (1) the divorcement of military power from economic and political power in so far as the latter is derived from the former; and (2) the availability of nuclear weapons, transforming war from a rational continuum with foreign policy, seeking to bend the enemy's will to one's own, into an instrument of the enemy's total destruction.

Throughout history, political power has tended to be a function of military power, and military power has in the modern age tended to be a function of economic and, more particularly, technological power. I need mention only two examples from modern history. The political ascendancy of Europe, especially in the form of colonial empires, was primarily due to a military superiority which, in turn, was the result of a technological differential in favour of the European nations. The political status of superpower is a function of the military ability to wage all-out nuclear war and to absorb a less than all-out one; an ability which, in turn, is due to industrial and technological capacity. This functional relationship between political, military, and economic power has been severed by the very dynamics of modern industrial and technological developments. In consequence, a nation or group of nations, completely devoid of a modern industrial and technological capacity and military potential, is able to wield political power over nations far superior to them in that capacity and potential. That ability results from the monopolistic or quasi-monopolistic control of raw materials essential to the operations of advanced economies and the financial power derived from that control. That dependence upon such controlled raw materials is itself dictated by industrial and technological advancement—that is to say, industrial and technological backwardness is a protection against such dependence, while such dependence is the price to be paid for industrial and technological advancement.

TWO BASIC FACTORS have in our period of history made possible this divorcement of political power from military and industrial-technological power. (1) Free trade between the private producers and consumers of certain raw materials and monopolistically controlled trade through colonial and semi-colonial arrangements by the consumer governments has been replaced by monopolistic or quasi-monopolistic controls on the part of the producer governments acting in concert. Formerly the consumers could keep the price low through colonial arrangements and the control of consumption; now the producers can keep the price high by controlling production.

(2) Formerly producers and consumers of raw materials were tied together by complementary interests the balance of which favoured the consumers. The latter's needs were limited as compared with the number of potential producers and the quantity of raw materials available. He had, accordingly, a choice among several producers to buy from, and also of the quantity to buy from the several producers chosen. What was once a buyer's market has become a seller's market. The consumption of raw materials has enormously increased not only in absolute terms —between 1760 and 1913 imports of food and raw materials to Great Britain increased 70-fold—but also relative to available resources. Thus oil has become the life-blood of industrially and technologically advanced nations many of which are completely (*e.g.* Japan), or in considerable measure (*e.g.* the nations of Western Europe), dependent upon imports from other nations.

Many of these nations, especially in the Middle East, are one-product producers in that they are completely devoid of modern industry and technology and are in the possession of but one natural product: Oil. Acting in concert, they can not only create havoc with the economies of the oil-importing nations by increasing the price of oil virtually at will; but they can also bring the industrial and technological life of the latter to a standstill and cause major social and political dislocations by shutting off the flow of oil

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completely or partially, permanently or temporarily. That is to say, since oil has become the life-blood of industrially and technologically advanced nations, control over the supply of oil implies control over the life of the oil-importing nations. This control has not only negative, destructive implications but, applied with sophistication, can become an instrument of political power. In other words, the oil-producing nations can make the supply and price of oil dependent upon certain policies on the part of the importing nations, supportive of and favourable to the former's interests.

SUCH A DISJUNCTION between military and industrial-technological power, on the one hand, and political power, on the other, had it occurred at any time before the Second World War would have been quickly and effectively redressed through the use of military power by the politically disadvantaged nations. A colonial or semi-colonial relationship would have been established between the producing and consuming nations, restoring the traditional functional relationship between political, military, and industrial-technological power. It is a distinguishing characteristic of the present period of world politics that the use of military power for those purposes indicated is no longer considered practicable. This is so for three interconnected reasons.

The moral climate permeating the age of de-colonisation is hostile to attempts at the revival of open colonial relationships, however much of them may have survived under the cover of emancipation and national independence. Furthermore, this moral climate favours guerrilla wars on behalf of de-colonisation, making military measures by consumer nations hazardous. Finally, given the interconnectedness of interests in contemporary world politics, especially between super- and great powers on the one hand, and former colonies on the other, the military issues in which one or the other of the nuclear powers is involved run a more or less immediate risk of being countered by another of the nuclear powers—and a conventional military confrontation by the nuclear powers cannot be completely insulated from the ability to wage nuclear war and their willingness to do so if the stakes appear to be sufficiently high. Consequently, the politically disadvantaged consumer nations have refrained from resorting to what was once considered the *ultima ratio regum:* military force.

THE MILITARY IMPOTENCE of well armed and otherwise strong powers *vis-à-vis* nations weak in every respect but two (the quasi-monopolistic control of oil, and enormous financial resources flowing therefrom) points up the basic defect of contemporary world politics, the main source of global disorder, and the principal threat to the survival of civilisation. It is the incompatibility of the Nation-State as a principle of political organisation with the social forces at work in the form of the technology of transportation, communication and warfare, and with the quasi-monopolistic control, by relatively few nations, of the products of nature necessary to maintain civilisation and life itself.

The technological revolutions of our age have rendered the Nation-State's principle of political organisation as obsolete as the first modern industrial revolution of the steam engine did feudalism. The governments of Nation-States are no longer able to perform the functions for the sake of which civilised governments have been instituted in the first place: to defend and promote the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of its citizenry. Unable to perform these functions with regard to their own citizens, these governments are incapable of performing them in their relations with each other. Once atomic proliferation has armed many of them with nuclear weapons, they will have become not only each other's enemies, but the enemies of humanity, their own peoples included. For their traditional policies, carried out within a novel technological world, carry within themselves the seeds of universal destruction.

The international disorder and its dénouement in a nuclear catastrophe, a dramatic potential in contemporary world politics, has been glossed over until recently by the relative coherence of, on the one hand, the two blocs dominated by the super-powers and, on the other, the weakness of the nations of the Third World. Unless present indications deceive, I fear that it is exactly the new diplomacy of movement, initiated by the present American Secretary of State, which will bring these hidden tendencies towards anarchy and nuclear destruction to the fore. To create out of these disintegrative and destructive tendencies a "structure of peace" would test the ability of the greatest of statesmen. Can it be that the statesmen of our time will be harking back to the vision which Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin shared—namely the division of the world into gigantic spheres of influence, whose mutual boundaries would be strictly defined and observed and within which a super-power would maintain peace and order . . . ?

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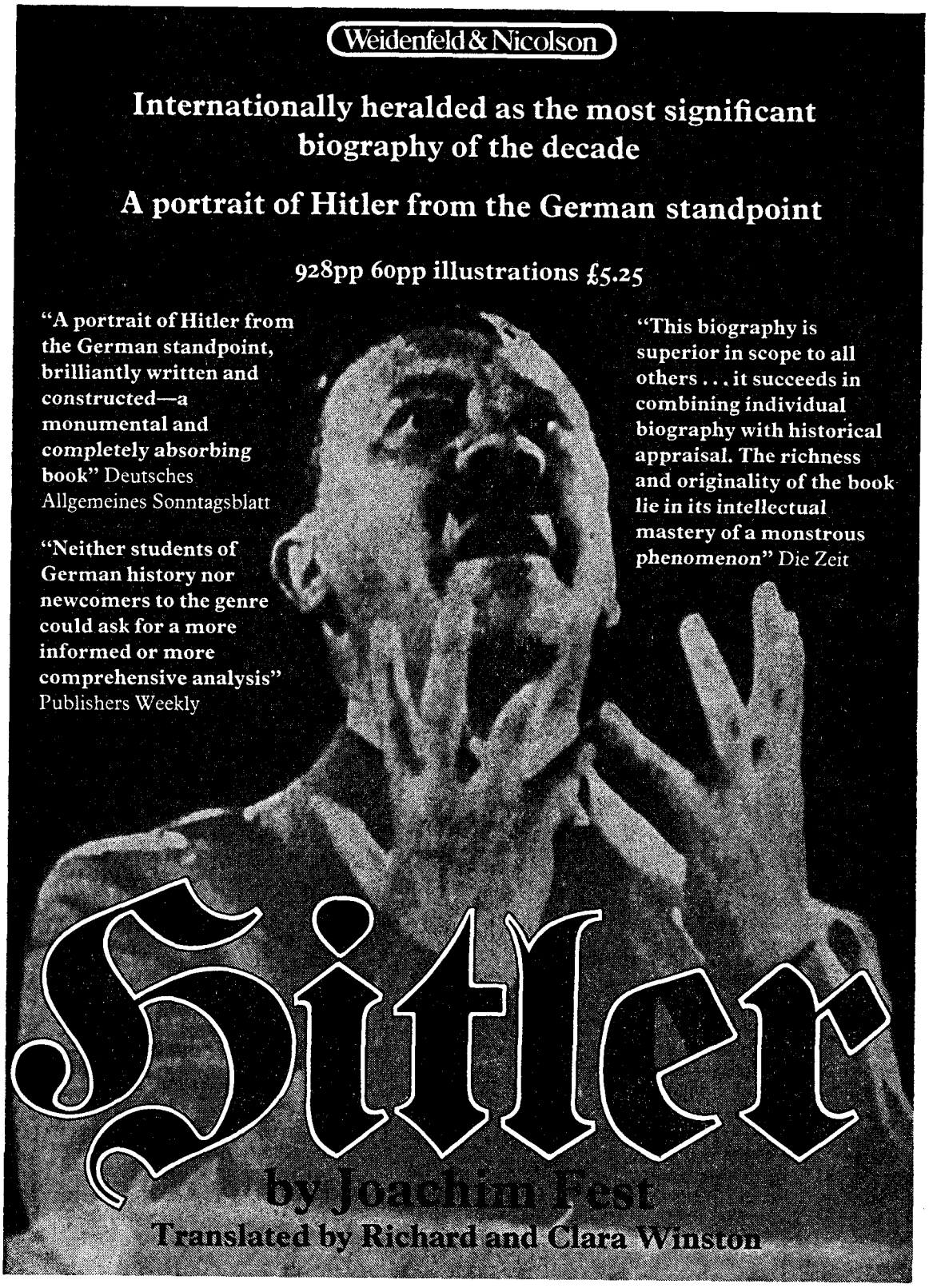

Hitler

by Joachim Fest

Translated by Richard and Clara Winston

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BOOKS & WRITERS

An Irish Window

Remaking W. B. Yeats—By JON STALLWORTHY

"ONE DAY WHEN I was twenty-three or twenty-four this sentence seemed to form in my head, without my willing it, much as sentences form when we are half-asleep: 'Hammer your thoughts into unity'." Yeats's subconscious image, anticipating that of the goldsmiths of Byzantium, is revealing of the man and his attitude to his calling. He saw himself as a maker, a word-smith giving form to the formless, hammering thoughts, experience, language into unity. "For years I tested all I did by that sentence."

Preparing the Shakespeare Head edition of his *Collected Works* for the press in 1908, he looked back on those years. The eight handsome volumes testified to a substantial achievement, but occupied with the Abbey Theatre he had written almost no poems for five years and must have wondered whether, as the Dublin gossips were saying, he would write no more. He had come to a cross-roads and, that December, self-doubting and self-critical, began the journal that was to become *Estrangement* and *The Death of Synge*. Synge, under sentence of death from cancer, had recently sent Yeats his poems. They were to prove a more valuable bequest than either could have imagined, for under their influence Yeats the following year returned to poetry himself.

With the poems came back his confidence, as the vitality of his journal testifies, and his growing interest in this self-portrait led him to enlist the help of his sister Lily in investigating their ancestors. In January he wrote to his father that she had "made out, in a book Lady Gregory has given me, a fine family tree. She is to keep the book by her and write in it all she discovers. It is very ingenious and [a] sort of tree of knowledge in which all the apples of pride arrange themselves in the most beautiful order." He was hopeful that she might find among the topmost branches one Mary Yeats of Lifford (d. 1673), whom he had discovered while seeking a coat of arms for a book-plate. This new interest must have owed something to his admiration for Lady Gregory and her country house, Coole Park, with its ancestral presences and

> *Beloved books that famous hands have bound,*
> *Old marble heads, old pictures everywhere;*

but it was a time when autobiography was in the air. 1911 saw the publication of *Ave*, the first volume of George Moore's *Hail and Farewell*. In this, Yeats appeared "lank as a rook, a-dream in black silhouette on a flowered wall-paper", and "thinner in his writings than in his talk." The following year he wrote to his father asking:

> would you like to write your autobiography? . . . I suggest—but this is only to start your imagination working—that in your first chapter or chapters you describe old relations and your childhood. You have often told us most interesting things, pictures of old Ireland that should not be lost. . . . You could say anything about anything, for after all, you yourself would be the theme, and there would be no need to be afraid of egotism, for as Oscar Wilde said, that is charming in a book because we can close it whenever we like. . . .

We may be grateful that the old painter left his son to write those *Reveries over Childhood and Youth*. Two literary portraits of the poet appeared in 1913: one by his boyhood friend Katharine Tynan, in her *Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences*; the other by George Moore, an even less flattering likeness than his last, in an article in the *English Review*. This describes how the poet, returning from America in 1904 and a fur coat, had begun to thunder against the middle classes.

> We asked ourselves why Willie Yeats should feel himself called upon to denounce the class to which he himself belonged essentially . . . with so admirable a parentage it did not seem necessary that a man should look back for an ancestor, and we had laughed at the story . . . that on one occasion when Yeats was crooning over Æ's fire he had said that if he had his rights he would be Duke of Ormonde, and that Æ had answered, "In any case, Willie, you are overlooking your father."

This caricature, with its malicious misrepresentation of a speech in which Yeats had urged the Irish aristocracy to subsidise Hugh Lane's picture gallery, prompted him to begin the family portrait he had suggested to his father. He started his *Reveries* in January 1914 and finished them on Christmas Day of that year. While he was at

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work, he read in *The Egoist* the 25 serial instalments of James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, detecting in them "the most remarkable new talent in Ireland today."

His own *Reveries* are as impressionistic as their title—with its French symbolist associations—suggests. In keeping with the tone of fireside recollection, there are no dates, but the themes are carefully defined and every detail contributes to the design. His first memory is "looking out of an Irish window at a wall covered with cracked and falling plaster"; a stable-boy's book of Orange rhymes introduces him to poetry; and of a great-aunt's house he remembers

> a little James I cream-jug with the Yeats motto and crest, and on her dining room mantelpiece a beautiful silver cup that had belonged to my great-great-grandfather, who had married a certain Mary Butler. It had upon it the Butler crest and had been already old at the date 1534, when the initials of some bride and bridegroom were engraved under the lip.

THE DOMINANT PRESENCE of the book is that of his seafaring grandfather, William Pollexfen. The old man's heroic exploits are chronicled not simply in celebration of family honour, but as a memorial also to "the indomitable Irishry." He was the prototype of all those "impetuous men", from Cuchulain to John Shawe-Taylor, who stalk through Yeats's poems. There was, however, another side to the family, and one to which he owed more of his own qualities. In certain miniatures he detected "courtesy and much gentleness", and in the 18th-century faces "a half-feminine charm." A favourite uncle, George Pollexfen, is shown possessed of a combination of these qualities, giving "to all men the respect due to their station, or their worth with an added measure of ceremony."

These themes found eloquent expression in two poems written in January/February 1914, that appeared as the Introductory and Closing Rhymes of *Responsibilities*, published that year. in the first, the poet invokes his forebears,

> *Merchant and scholar who have left me blood*
> *That has not passed through any huxter's loin,*

soldiers, and the old merchant skipper, and asks

> *Pardon that for a barren passion's sake,*
> *Although I have come close on forty-nine,*
> *I have no child, I have nothing but a book,*
> *Nothing but that to prove your blood and mine.*

The second poem, like the first a single brilliantly sustained sentence, speaks of the inspiration through which he keeps contact with the dead (probably a reference to his friends of the Rhymers' Club), and celebrates his friendship with Lady Gregory. Under her "ancient roof" he can forgive the malice of George Moore that has made him

> *Notorious, till all my priceless things*
> *Are but a post the passing dogs defile.*

Reveries over Childhood and Youth was published in 1915, and towards the end of that year Yeats wrote to his father that he was going on with his memoirs, "but the rest shall be for my eye alone." It was a time of great violence. The armies of Great Britain, France and Germany were bleeding to death on the Western Front; in Dublin the Easter Rising of 1916 was savagely put down and its leaders shot. It was no doubt a comfort to Yeats in those years of public and private turmoil to be able to return to that other world of the '80s and '90s, before his friends of the Rhymers' Club went to their deaths, and Maud Gonne to her marriage with "a drunken vainglorious lout." When the Easter Week executions left her a hero's widow, Yeats proposed to her again and was rejected; a procedure repeated in summer 1917, after which he proposed to her daughter Iseult, also to no avail. That October he married Georgina Hyde-Lees and set his memoirs aside, the present having a more pressing claim on his attention than the past. The story of Mrs Yeats's automatic writing and her husband's excited response to the revelations of "the communicators" speaking through her is well known. This exposition came to an end in 1920, leaving him with fifty notebooks of automatic script and a smaller number recording what had come in sleep.

The poet who returned to his autobiography in 1920 was much changed from the one who set it aside in 1917. His wife had brought him happiness, a philosophical system that was flowering into poems, a child to placate the dynastic demands of his "old fathers", and they had just moved into the tower that was to be the central symbol of his work. The love poet of the '90s had become a national poet, conscious of his role as descendant of the ancient *file*, historian and prophet, guardian of tradition and the friend of princes. As he hammered his thoughts into the unity of *A Vision*, he set to work to find a pattern for his life.

THE FIRST DRAFT of his Autobiography is a fascinating document.[1] As Denis Donoghue says in his brief but eloquent Introduction, it is "work of notable candour, remarkable in a poet who found it hard to be candid." The phrase "first draft" is Yeats's own, and it will suggest to

[1] *Memoirs*. By W. B. YEATS. Transcribed and edited by DENIS DONOGHUE. Macmillan, £4.00.

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some readers a closer relationship to the final drafts of *The Trembling of the Veil* and *Dramatis Personae* than proves to be the case. The principal interest of these early memoirs lies in the considerable amount of material that never found its way into the published texts and the alterations that the remainder underwent before finding its way into print. It would no doubt have been difficult for Professor Donoghue to have devised a key to passages from the Autobiography that passed in one form or another into *The Trembling of the Veil* and *Dramatis Personae,* but so useful are the keys he provides to passages from the Journal published in *Estrangement* and *The Death of Synge*, that one wishes he had attempted it. As it is, the reader who wants to see Yeats remaking his life must be for ever referring from the index to the text of the published *Autobiographies* (1955), as he reads this edition of the "first draft." It is a laborious task but a rewarding one.

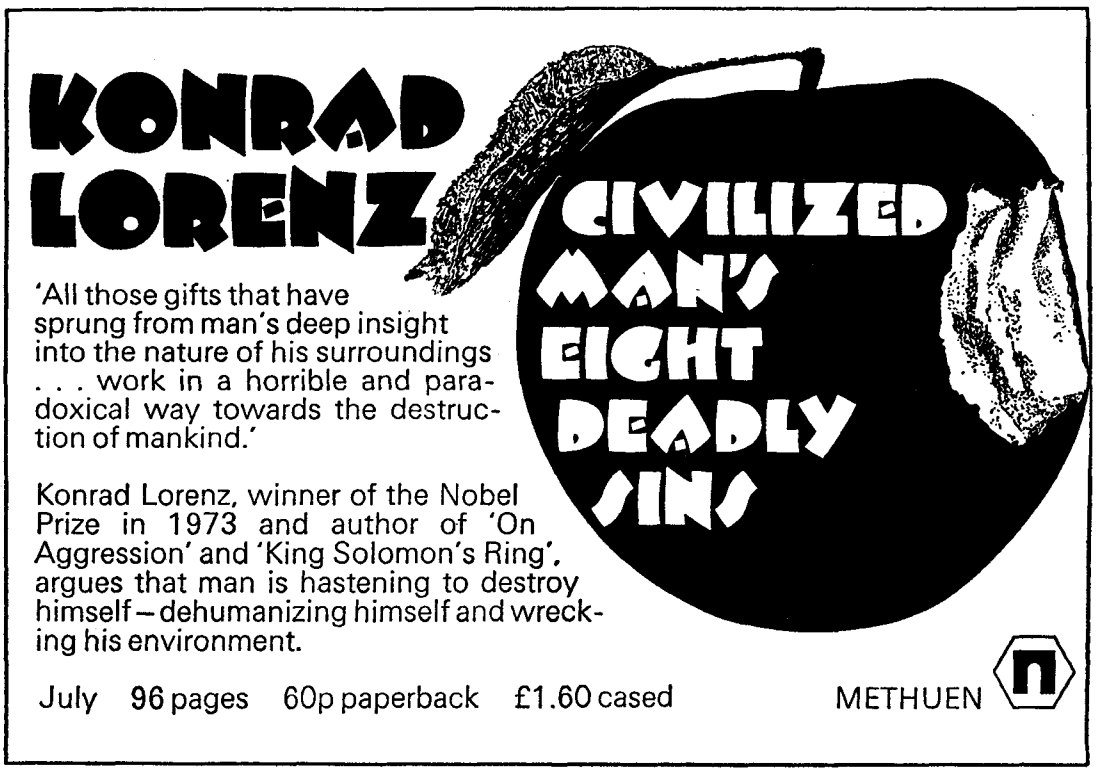
The Autobiography opens with family quarrels over Ruskin and mysticism, two subjects that so enraged J. B. Yeats that, throwing Willie out of the room one evening, he broke the glass in a picture with the back of his head. Another night, after a similar argument, he pursued his son upstairs to bed, squared up to him, wanting to box:

> and when I said I could not fight my own father replied, "I don't see why you should not." My brother, who had been in bed for some time, started up in a violent passion because we had awaked him. My father fled without speaking, and my brother turned to me with, "Mind, not a word till he apologizes." Though my father and I are very talkative, a couple of days passed before I spoke or he apologized.

These comic-opera scenes did not find their way into *The Trembling of the Veil*, which opens by contrast on a note of domestic harmony. Yeats was not a quarrelsome man, but he did have the occasional angry exchange—with Henderson, secretary of the Abbey Theatre, with Edmund Gosse, even with Maud Gonne. Always he regretted it, as a breach of the courtesy he so cultivated, and seldom compounds that discourtesy by repeating the episode in his final version.

As a former art-student, disciple of William Morris, and the son and brother of painters, Yeats was more observant than he sometimes pretended, and in his prose portraits liked to give his sitter a domestic setting. "In what year did I first meet Oscar Wilde?" he asks himself in his Autobiography, and goes on to recall a Christmas dinner at 16 Tite Street.

> I was delighted by his pretty wife and children, and his beautiful house designed by Godwin. He had a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METHUEN

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> white dining-room, the first I had seen, chairs, walls, cushions all white, but in the middle of the table a red cloth table-centre with a red terra-cotta statue and above it a red hanging lamp. I have never and shall never meet conversation that could match with his. . . . "Ah, Yeats," he said that Christmas Day—he had been reading to me from the proof sheets of his unpublished *Decay of Lying*—"we Irish are too poetical to be poets; we are a nation of brilliant failures."

Yeats clearly had this by him when, five years later, he rewrote the episode for the first part of *The Trembling of the Veil*. After adding three sentences about Wilde's favourable review of *The Wanderings of Oisin* and his style of dress, he turns to his setting:

> He lived in a little house at Chelsea that the architect Godwin had decorated with an elegance that owed something to Whistler. There was nothing mediaeval nor Pre-Raphaelite, no cupboard door with figures upon flat gold, no peacock-blue, no dark background. I remember vaguely a white drawing-room with Whistler etchings, "let into" white panels, and a dining-room all white, chairs, walls, mantelpiece, carpet, except for a diamond-shaped piece of red cloth in the middle of the table under a terracotta statuette, and, I think, a red-shaded lamp hanging from the ceiling to a little above the statuette. It was perhaps too perfect in its unity, his past of a few years before had gone too completely, and I remember thinking that the perfect harmony of his life there, with his beautiful wife and two young children, suggested some deliberate composition.
>
> He commended and dispraised himself during dinner by attributing characteristics like his own to his country: "We Irish are too poetical to be poets; we are a nation of brilliant failures, but we are the greatest race of talkers since the Greeks."

The final, added, sentence reveals something of both men. With Wilde as his principal example, Yeats the poet, playwright, senator had forged himself a distinctive style of conversation and this—rather than a style more conventionally bookish—he chose for his autobiographical writing. In his final draft, though not his first, he remembers his host's room "*vaguely*" and qualifies his description of its red-shaded lamp with a mock-hesitant "*I think*." The art conceals the art: the way, for example, Wilde's wife and children are placed as a final illustration of the achieved harmony of Wilde's life; a harmony to be broken, as Yeats knows his readers know, by the passion here symbolised by the dramatic red-*shaded* lamp burning at the centre of his ordered white world. The voice of 1921 is more confident, more rhetorical, more resonant than the voice of 1915–16, and much more allusive. The "guardian of tradition" gives his self-portrait a background of his intellectual furniture, the books and paintings he has assimilated and which have made him what he is.

IF THIS FURNITURE is more in evidence in the final self-portrait than in the first sketch, because it is after all an essential element of the portrait, many of the figures prominent in the first sketch are subsequently painted out or reduced in size. The most notable example of this reduction is Maud Gonne. She dominates the Autobiography from her first doom-laden appearance.

> I was twenty-three years old when the troubling of my life began. I had heard from time to time in letters from Miss O'Leary, John O'Leary's old sister, of a beautiful girl who had left the society of the Viceregal Court for Dublin nationalism. In after years I persuaded myself that I felt premonitory excitement at the first reading of her name. Presently she drove up to our house in Bedford Park with an introduction from John O'Leary to my father. I had never thought to see in a living woman so great beauty. It belonged to famous pictures, to poetry, to some legendary past. A complexion like the blossom of apples . . . and a stature so great she seemed of a divine race.

She enters *The Trembling of the Veil* less dramatically but more appropriately. The story must be allowed to unfold.

> Presently a hansom drove up to our door at Bedford Park with Miss Maud Gonne, who brought an introduction to my father from old John O'Leary, the Fenian leader. She vexed my father by praise of war, war for its own sake, and as the creator of certain virtues but as if there were some virtue in excitement itself. . . . that day she seemed a classical impersonation of the Spring, the Virgilian commendation "She walks like a goddess" made for her alone. Her complexion was luminous, like that of apple blossom through which the light falls, and I remember her standing that first day by a great heap of such blossoms in the window.

No longer is she introduced by a tragic messenger but, rather, is made to introduce herself by what was to become her theme—"war for its own sake"—in the greater design of the completed work. This note was sounded more faintly in the first draft, and a good deal later: "She spoke of her desire for power, apparently for its own sake."

Yeats wrote in this first draft: "I have a memory, full of self-mockery, of the Jubilee riot of 1897" and goes on to tell how he persuaded Maud to fulfil a promise given to James Connolly that she would address an open air meeting; how she devised for the subsequent procession a funeral cortège bearing a coffin with "The British Empire" painted upon it; and how, when the crowd began breaking windows where there were jubilee decorations, she walked "with a joyous face." Finally, he tells how, when they were drinking tea in the National Club and a man rushed in to say that the police were batoning the crowd, he prevented her from going outside and later was told "I had made her do the only cowardly thing of her life."

These events are described in *The Trembling of*

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the Veil more dramatically and with no trace of self-mockery. The images of himself and Maud Gonne must accord with those presented in his poems.

> I find Maud Gonne at her hotel talking to a young working-man who looks very melancholy. She had offered to speak at one of the regular meetings of his Socialist society about Queen Victoria, and he has summoned what will be a great meeting in the open air. She has refused to speak, and he says that her refusal means his ruin, as nobody will believe that he had any promise at all. . . . The young man is James Connolly who, with Padraic Pearse, is to make the Insurrection of 1916 and to be executed.

Yeats heightens the immediacy of his account by using the present tense and, with a dramatist's cunning, withholds the young man's name to the end. When he comes to speak of the riot, "Connolly carries in procession a coffin with the words 'British Empire' upon it, and police and mob fight for its ownership." Connolly is made to appear the organiser of the procession; not Maud, as in the first draft, who now walks "with her laughing head thrown back." She is invested with the heroic gaiety that Yeats elsewhere ascribes to tragic heroes and heroines; and there is no mention of their "cowardice" in the National Club.

The most sensational revelation of the Autobiography concerns Maud's relationship with the French Boulangist journalist and politician, Lucien Millevoye. As his mistress she had borne him a child who died. She had been on the point of breaking with Millevoye but, conceiving the notion that the lost child might be reborn in another, had returned with Millevoye to make love in the vault where the boy was buried. Her daughter Iseult was the fair result of this ghoulish experiment. Delicacy would have prevented Yeats from publishing this story even had he wanted to, which he doubtless did not. The same scruples lead him to cut all mention of his affair with Diana Vernon (Olivia Shakespeare), which he describes in touching and at times comic detail. For other reasons, perhaps because they were not essential to his design, various other women such as the Gore-Booth sisters and Sarah Purser do not reappear in the final version. For all the frustrations of his prudish youth, he evidently had a healthy interest in sexuality and felt obliged to omit his references to Arthur Symons's cheerful lechery, the sexual excess that paralysed the Count de Basterot from the waist down, or Henley's syphilis.

LOOKING BEYOND such intriguing details to the emerging design of *The Trembling of the Veil* and *Dramatis Personae*, one sees Yeats seeking a new balance between his self-portrait and the surrounding portraits of his contemporaries. At work on the self-portrait, again concerned to correct an imbalance, he reduces the space devoted to occult activities by perhaps a third and increases his discussion of poetry. His theme, as Joseph Ronsley has pointed out in a very illuminating book,[2] is the search for "unity of being" in himself and others:

> he examines the inability of his friends to achieve fullness of being; from these he seeks unity in Ireland as if it, like the persons within it, were also in quest of some meaningful totality. From Ireland he moves to consider the race, discussing with a kind of interested calm the present stage of man's spiritual evolution in relation to the *Anima Mundi*.

Four Years, Book I of what was to become *The Trembling of the Veil*, was published in three serial instalments in 1921. It was an immediate success and left Yeats feeling "as if I had bathed and put on clean linen." Books II–V were written and the whole published over the next fourteen months. In January 1923 he received the Nobel Prize for Literature and in 1925 published *The Bounty of Sweden*, as "a sort of 'bread-and-butter letter' " to the country where he had been so royally entertained. The following year he returned to the Journal begun in 1908 and set to work preparing this for publication as *Estrangement* (1926) and *The Death of Synge* (1928). Professor Donoghue's edition enables us again to observe Yeats at work. He cuts many entries (and all dates), prunes others, reorders a few, but rewrites relatively little, as if aware of the dangers of putting new cloth into the old garment.

The first entry in the Journal is the poem about Maud Gonne, later entitled "No Second Troy", and there can be little doubt that he was referring to her when in entry 44 he wrote: "I am writing this that a friend for whom and for myself I write may know me for good and evil, and that I may watch it and emend." Both entries, and many more in which Maud figures prominently, are cut as the Journal is reshaped to record the poet's estrangement from the Ireland of his time. He cuts also passages of self-doubt, self-criticism, and a reference to a minor nervous breakdown, thereby advancing the introduction of his principal theme.

> Jan. 22 [1909]. I have been talking to one of the group around George Russell, typical of the new class which is rising in Ireland: often not ill-bred in manner and therefore the more manifestly with the ill-breeding of the mind. Every thought made in some manufactory, and with the mark upon it of its wholesale origin—all those thoughts which were never really thought out in their current form in any individual mind, being the creation of impersonal mechanism—of schools, of textbooks, of newspapers, these above all. . . . This ill-breeding

[2] *Yeats's Autobiography: Life as Symbolic Pattern.* Harvard University Press, 1968.

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> of the mind is far more destructive than the mere bad manners that spits on the floor. Is not all charm inherited?

When this entry, number 6 in the Journal, became number III in *Estrangement* (and from now on I distinguish the first draft and the final draft by their respective Arabic and Roman numerals), the only significant alteration was to the, now undated, opening sentence: "I have been talking to a man typical of a class common elsewhere but new in Ireland." The theme is stated more directly, the needlessly discourteous reference to his friend has gone, and an implicit compliment to his country has been added. The cancer is diagnosed: the materialism of the middle class, founded upon "impersonal mechanism", dividing and devouring the values of a protestant aristocracy and a Catholic peasantry. Five entries later in the Journal, two in *Estrangement*, the poet offers his remedy:

> To oppose the new ill-breeding of Ireland, which may in a few years destroy all that has given Ireland a distinguished name in the world—"Mother of the bravest soldiers and the most beautiful women", cried Borrow, or some such words, remembering the hospitality shown to him, a distributor of Bibles, by the Irish Monks of Spain—I can only set up a secondary or interim personality created out of the tradition of myself, and this personality (alas, only possible to me in my writings) must be always gracious and simple. It must have that slight separation from interests which makes charm possible, while remaining near enough for passion. Is not charm what it is because an escape from mechanism? (V)

By remaking himself in the mould of *file* from the heroic age, he sought to keep alive in his work the ideals of beauty, ceremony, courtesy, and charm (key words of *Estrangement* and the later poems); ideals that might prompt succeeding generations to

> *disinter*
> *The workman, noble and saint, and all things run*
> *On that unfashionable gyre again.*

The "Romantic Ireland" of his imagination, traces of which he found in the cottages of Gort as well as in the drawing room of Coole, had and would have again the social and cultural unity of 15th-century Ferrara and Urbino. Such a unity can only be achieved by love, and in entry 38 he meditates on the nature of this love:

> Allingham and Davis are the two different kinds of love in Ireland. In Allingham I find the entire emotion for the place one grew up in . . . Davis was possessed on the other hand with ideas of Ireland, with conscious patriotism. His Ireland was artificial, an idea built up in a couple of generations by a few commonplace men. This artificial idea has done me as much harm as the other has helped me.

In *Estrangement* and in the overall design of Yeats's *Autobiographies* Lady Gregory stands as the living example of "the entire emotion" and what it can achieve:

> in the work of Lady Gregory, of Synge, of O'Grady, of Lionel Johnson, in my own work, a school of journalists with simple moral ideas could find right building material to create a historical and literary nationalism as powerful as the old and nobler. That done, they could bid the people love and not hate. (LIII)

The disunity of Ireland he blamed on the hatred cultivated "as the one energy of their movement" by "the lower-middle class from whom the patriotic associations have drawn their journalists and their leaders." The sterility of this hatred, equated with sexual sterility, stands in *Estrangement* as the antithesis of the creative love that alone can rebuild "Romantic Ireland." To some extent this antithesis is a reflection of Yeats's own nature, for he was himself both a good lover and a good hater. In 1936 he replied to Lady Dorothy Wellesley:

> *You think it horrible that lust and rage*
> *Should dance attention upon my old age;*
> *They were not such a plague when I was young;*
> *What else have I to spur me into song?*

There is evidence of his personal hatreds in the Journal, but this—like the evidence of his love for Maud Gonne—he omits when reworking it as *Estrangement* and *The Death of Synge*. His sub-themes must be played down in the interests of the grand design.

THE YEATS WHO in 1923 went to receive his Nobel medal from the King of Sweden had hammered his thoughts and his work into unity, and he returned with something more valuable than his medal: a living image of the unity of culture he had been seeking for more than thirty years. That experience crowned his life, as his characteristically impressionistic account of it in *The Bounty of Sweden* was to crown his *Autobiographies*. The 14th-century Irish *file*, Murray O'Daly, had boasted that he sat "in the presence of monarchs." His 20th-century successor came to Stockholm as Ariosto to the Court of Ferrara and was not disappointed with what he found.

> Prince Eugene, friend and patron of Swedish artists, and himself an accomplished painter . . . has helped to decorate the Stockholm Town Hall, "beginning every day at nine o'clock, and working all day like the rest, and for two years", and . . . at the opening ceremony he had not stood among the Royal Family, "but among the artists and workmen". . . .

He meets a headmaster who says: "I was the Prince's tutor, and I am his friend." The need to reform Irish education had been one of the themes of *The Death of Synge*, but in Stockholm

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Yeats is told "Denmark is well educated and education can reach everybody, as education cannot in big nations." He finds in the Swedish Impressionist painters "a stronger feeling for particular places" than in their French counterparts, and is reminded of the Sligo scenes painted by his brother Jack. The Swedish artists, he concludes, "have found an emotion held in common", the emotion so eroded in Ireland—love.

The Bounty of Sweden is much more than a "bread-and-butter letter" to a country that had honoured him more than his own; it is, as is Yeats's whole volume of *Autobiographies*, an open letter to the Irish people in general and to her artists in particular. The message of his life is the message of his work: only by remaking themselves can they hope to remake their country.

Irish poets, learn your trade,
Sing whatever is well made,
Scorn the sort now growing up
All out of shape from toe to top,
Their unremembering hearts and heads
Base-born products of base beds.
Sing the peasantry, and then
Hard-riding country gentlemen,
The holiness of monks, and after
Porter-drinkers' randy laughter;
Sing the lords and ladies gay
That were beaten into the clay
Through seven heroic centuries;
Cast your eyes on other days
That we in coming days may be
Still the indomitable Irishry.

Byron & the Moral North

The Englishness of "Don Juan"—By PETER PORTER

THIS YEAR it is almost impossible to avoid Byron. The BBC's Radio 3 is practically given over to assemblies of words by him, about him, tangential to him and explanatory of him. I too am adding to the Byronic pollution, and I need some justification, since I am not a scholar. As I was coming by Hyde Park Corner the other day, I looked at Byron's statue and I thought its quizzical expression suggested that his Lordship expected some justification from me of my professing any expertise in his poetry. I could think of only two excuses—after W. H. Auden and Browning, he was the first poet who made me feel that poetry had to do with pleasure rather than edification or mystery, and, as a poet myself, I might be able to point up some aspects of his work which real critics had made little of.

But it's a hard task. If Byron has had a poor press from our severe men-of-letters—hard words from Eliot, Pound and Leavis for instance—he has always held the unrivalled interest of biographers, playwrights, film makers and excitable ladies. The first selection from Byron I came across was made for an Oxford University Press textbook, by W. H. Auden. There I read that only three English authors enjoyed reputations on the Continent—Shakespeare, Byron and Oscar Wilde. Auden went on to delineate the true Byron, and in those days—it was the middle 'thirties—was quite prepared to use Byron as a stick to beat Wordsworth with. The Byron Auden established still seems to me the true Byron—the reviver of 18th-century values, the Neo-Augustan author of *Beppo*, *The Vision of Judgment* and *Don Juan*—but I am no longer satisfied by the neat paradox which this categorical judgment offers. Those are the right poems to concentrate on, but they are more mysterious than they seem. Byron's letters to England in defence of Pope are remarkable examples of informed sympathy, but Byron is not really much like Pope. After he purged himself of "Byronism" (and I doubt that his more worldly self really wanted to do without all the advantages in girls and golden opinions which the larmoyant *Childe Harold* brought him in), he found himself in a unique position—he was able to put the main body of English poetry back on the road after the major derailment of Romanticism.

Ever since Byron, our poetry has been a fight between the "wit" tradition of the 17th century and Pope, and the "feeling" tradition of Wordsworth and Keats. To those well-informed people who wince at this appalling simplification, I can only say that this is how it feels to a practitioner of poetry. Sitting down today to write, one knows in one's bones that there are great spirits like Rochester, Byron, Hardy and Auden behind one and equally great spirits outside in snarling opposition—from Wordsworth to the new American aestheticism. This is why Byron seems hardly a poet at all to some people—they could accept his attitudinising if his verse were less formal, or they would admit him to the ranks of light verse writers if they didn't find his personality so powerful. Byron makes us question the whole notion of inspiration in poetry, the tradition of the artist as someone marked out from

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his fellow-men, who, in his special suffering, is granted powers of analysis not given to others. The author of *Childe Harold* is such a person, but the author of *Don Juan* is not.

It's very salutary to read the magnificent new edition of Byron's letters and journals.[1] He was born writing prose well—but certainly not writing poetry well. The letters of his years at Harrow and Cambridge reveal an interesting but commonplace personality, distinguished from the other bright youths of his age only by his singular grace with English prose. The poems he wrote then might have been no more than works of accreditation. It's true they were successful, but Byron knew that they were not worth much. He seems at this time also to have had little taste for poetical states of mind: in this regard, he is at the opposite pole from Keats and Shelley. Getting into debt, following boxing and racing, keeping girls and drinking heavily—his personality was set to follow the pattern of all young rakes. And his writing verse would have been no bar to such a prognosis—many of the young dandies did so.

But, of course, he *was* different. The superb vigour of his mind and the unparalleled vivacity of his prose were already in evidence, and so were his self-destructive irony and his melancholy. But before these things could come to fruition, he had to work his way through the productions which made him famous—*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, the heaven-storming dramas and the romantic narrative poems. To understand Byron —and we have to remember that he died at 36— we have to look away from the legend and towards the mature poetry. Byron *was* the Romantic he seemed to be, and he wrote copious quantities of verse to prove it, but his talent was satirical, sceptical and classical. He isn't Keats—two different sorts of genius in the one body, the poet and the letter-writer. Rather, the progress of Byron's life is the coming together of the man of the correspondence with the poet, until in *Don Juan* he writes poetry even more succinct, stylish and original than the prose he had always written in his letters.

I don't discount the romantic poems entirely: after all, fashion may distance us from them unnecessarily. But, in the middle of his rather received lyrics and assertive narratives, the real Byron shows up only in comradely doggerel and satirical quips. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* was an early sortie into his chosen terrain, but the mantle of Dryden and Pope hangs heavily on him: couplets, except perhaps in *The Curse of Minerva*, with its remarkable philippic against Scotland, were not his medium. His genius waited until the last eight years of his life, and then presented him with the perfect form to embody it—I mean the eight-line stanza of *Beppo*, *The Vision of Judgment* and *Don Juan*. I don't know how many English poets used this stanza before Byron (translators of Ariosto, such as Harington and Stewart did, of course)—I only know that it proved to be the perfect vehicle for his imagination, and that, in it, he took the field against Wordsworthian solemnity and Coleridgean mysticism. Whether he meant to or not, Byron restored the social role of English poetry—that shining improvement of the everyday which has always been the natural tone of the best English poets. Byron's mind has been described as vulgar and man-of-the-world, and his style as easy and familiar. I suggest that in his best poems he is more in the vein of Chaucer and Shakespeare, at least when they are working in their middle field. A sense of pleasure in the ordinary emotions of men is part of the genius of his best poems.

AT THE SAME TIME, it isn't enough to suggest that, in *Don Juan*, Byron looked backward to the Augustans. *Don Juan* is wit and satire modernised by Romanticism, broadened by the emergent democracy of Byron's liberal viewpoint. He found it easy to be radical in politics, having outraged public morality; but all the time he was secure as an aristocrat—at least while living in Italy. There isn't anything insincere in this: Byron's complex sense of being both at variance with his times and the harbinger of a new liberal age owes a lot to the fortunate position he occupied in society. Keats, for instance, was probably a radical too, but he would have been persecuted for expressing it. He had no desire to, being, like Dylan Thomas in the Age of Auden, a pure artist, not a social one. But the greatest poems are written in the impure styles—at least, if they are to be of any length. *Don Juan* is the quintessence of impurity. That is why it is so readable.

Before I come to my main theme, the essential Englishness of Byron's best poetry, I'd like to mention an aspect of *Don Juan* which,

[1] *Byron's Letters & Journals*. Vol. 1: *In My Hot Youth*. Vol. 2: *Famous in My Time* Vol. 3: *Alas! the Love of Women*. Edited by LESLIE A. MARCHAND. John Murray, £4.75 each.

Among the many Byron books published or reissued this year are:

Lord Byron: Accounts Rendered. By DORIS LANGLEY MOORE. Murray, £6.75.

A Choice of Byron's Verse. Edited by DOUGLAS DUNN. Faber, £1.

Lord Byron's Wife. By MALCOLM ELWIN. Murray, £7.50.

Byron: The Years of Fame and *Byron in Italy*. By PETER QUENNELL. Collins, £2.95.

The Byron Women. By MARGOT STRICKLAND. Peter Owen, £3.60.

Byron's Daughter. By CATHERINE TURNEY. Peter Davies. £3.75.

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though commented on by some scholars, has not penetrated much into the public consciousness. This is the influence of the Italian romances on Byron's later poetry. He translated the first canto of the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci: this was in Ravenna in 1820, two years after he had begun *Don Juan*, but the influence of the Italian epic-parodists was strong throughout his years in Italy. The fascinating aspect of his coming to *Don Juan via* Ariosto and Pulci is in the comparison of the English and Italian approaches to writing verse romances. The English imagination is Gothic and labyrinthine; the Italian, suave and sceptical. Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* stays its great length precisely because of the dry precision of the poetry. Stuffed with rich imagery and euphuistic elaboration, it would be intolerable. Or, put another way, without the preserving devices of self-parody the high emotions would be ludicrous. Lacking such insurance, *The Faerie Queene* has sated its common readers and become the property of scholars. Pulci, of course, was being playful, pleasing the ladies of the Medici court by parodying the heroic style judged proper for Charlemagne's paladins. Though Byron's translation of the first part of *Morgante* is not very good poetry, he must have found Pulci's attitudes attractive. Indeed, both *Beppo* and *Don Juan* owe some of their scepticism to the old Italian poets. Critics have looked for Italian local colour and detail in *Don Juan*, and remarked on how little there is. I suggest that it is in Byron's sardonic treatment of his subject that the real Italian influence lies.

There are more long poems in English than most people readily remember. In my opinion, *Don Juan* is, by a long way, the most readable of them all. Readable, because it is the most inventive and original and the least burdened by its style. Behind it lies Butler's *Hudibras*, a great poem spoiled by being cast in short four-foot lines and rhyming in couplets; and ahead of it Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, an almost indigestible work of genius which nevertheless gathers up the sensibility of its age in a whirlwind of speculation. *Don Juan* has always been misrepresented, though even its detractors have been quick to acknowledge its authority. One can list the usual complaints against it and follow them with errata—uneven (they mean various); coarse (true); slipshod (inventive in both character and prosody); trivial (realistic); unpoetic (poetic in a new way); episodic (wide-ranging); cynical (not like Wordsworth). To have earned the disapproval of Byron's libertine friends, to say nothing of Harriette Wilson and Lady Caroline Lamb, any work would have had to be completely against the fashion of its age. It provoked much hostility from its earliest re-

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viewers, as this couplet from Canto Four shows: Byron is commenting on the English critics' reaction to his first two cantos:

> *Through needles' eyes it easier for the camel is*
> *To pass, than those two cantos into families.*

Nobody, however, seems to have doubted that it was new and important. And as Byron progressed with the poem, he grew to love it more and to defend it vigorously to the Countess Guiccioli and his London correspondents. Critical opinion today usually declares Cantos Two and Three, the Haidée Cantos, to be the best, but in my opinion the poem, though unfinished, works towards its climax in the last seven cantos—Ten to Sixteen—which bring Juan to England. England and the English people, in all their monstrous vitalities and hypocrisies, are Byron's concern in the poem throughout: here at the end he can devote the whole of his loving hatred to them, not just glance bowls off them while putting Juan through a set of Mediterranean and Russian adventures. Canto One shows this English bias well enough, as the following quotation, which gives me my title, shows:

> *Happy the nations of the moral North!*
> *Where all is virtue, and the winter season*
> *Sends sin, without a rag on, shivering forth*
> *(Twas snow that brought St Anthony to reason);*
> *Where juries cast up what a wife is worth,*
> *By laying whate'er sum, in mulct, they please on*
> *The lover, who must pay a handsome price,*
> *Because it is a marketable vice.*

His experience of the English courts was before Byron's eyes in this early stanza, and it takes only the smallest distraction to set Byron off from his descriptions of Seville and the young Juan back to the England of his self-exile. We are very soon introduced to Juan's pious and prudish mother. Even without footnotes, we can feel that she is a peculiarly English person and not at all Spanish. Byron's friends, when they read the poem in 1818, were horrified to read a portrait in words of his wife. And when describing Seville society, Byron goes off happily at tangents all the time to deal with England—Sir Samuel Romilly, the Poet Laureate, the Lake Poets and the rest of his anathemas.

The only un-English thing in *Don Juan*, right from the start, is the character of the Don himself—or rather, the lack of character. The Don, except when embodying a powerful humour, as when experiencing the height of youthfully idealistic love with Haidée, has very little personality. He is the skewer in Byron's kebab—he doesn't so much do things, he has things happen to him, and his adventures, like Childe Harold's before him, are Byron's opportunity to comment on everything and anything he can think of, only this time with a special bias towards England and London society. Canto One serves as a splendid key signature for the whole poem—the form, the wit, the realism, and the fondness for extempore moralising are all there. Byron's letters reveal him as an acute critic of poetry: there is almost as much about literature in them as about Italy, politics or women. He had begun the poem with an attack on Southey. Now, at the end of the Canto One, he returns to the attack with a mock poetical credo, the luckless Lake poets again coming in for abuse.

IN 1818 BYRON WROTE to Tom Moore about his poem, "It is meant to be a little quietly facetious upon everything. But I doubt whether it is not too free for these very modest days." A year later, to his banker friend Kinnaird, he commented;

> As to *Don Juan*, confess, confess—you dog and be candid—that it is the sublime of that there sort of writing—it may be bawdy, but is it not good English? It may be profligate, but is it not life, is it not the thing? Could any man have written it who has not lived in the world?—and fooled in a post-chaise?—in a hackney coach?—in a gondola? on a table?—and under it? I have written about a hundred stanzas of a third Canto, but it is damned modest—the outcry has frighted me. I have such projects for the Don but the Cant is so much stronger than the Cunt, nowadays, that the benefit of experience in a man who had well weighed the worth of both monosyllables must be lost to despairing posterity.

But Byron was right: *Don Juan* is a damned modest poem—in fact, one of the least bawdy poems in the language. Its fault for its first readers was its realism. Byron has little of that heated morality of Rochester—indignation and morality proceeding from a loving involvement in vice. Byron could have made his hero as prurient as he liked, had he kept him sentimental. Even the picture of first love stays less permanently in the reader's mind than the picture of respectable society lying in wait to warp it. Everything remains humorous, though we learn in Canto Two that Julia has to enter a convent as a result of her illicit liaison. But Julia's incarceration fits into the same world as the disasters of the Danube siege and the decimation of the Russian army. Like *Candide*, Don Juan gets its effects by subtly juxtaposing the little disasters of sensibility with the genocidal horrors of *realpolitik*. One can sense Byron's appetite for such venial sins as hypocrisy and materialism warming up right through the poem, getting ready to anatomise their homeland, the prosperous and victorious British Isles.

Perhaps this is the right place to make my second, and last, digression. It is a double digression, and concerns two topics: the relation-

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ship of Byron's Don Juan to the doomed amorist of tradition, and secondly, the way the prosody works—the contrivances which make Byron's *ottava rima* so effective. Byron was rather a late-comer to the Don Juan story, and, since his time, there have been many further recruits. His treatment of the Don can be put on one side, and all the rest of the versions, whatever their local differences, on the other. The one link between Byron's poems and the rest is Juan's power as a lover. But Byron dispenses with the supernatural machinery of punishment, and its modern elaboration, the "overreacher" or defiant rebel whose amours are only the necessary sinful accreditations of his defiance of Heaven. Tirso de Molina's prototype Don Juan de Tenorio is still visible, beneath the layers of sophistication in the treatments of Molière, Da Ponte and Mozart, Dargomijsky, Lenau and Bernard Shaw. Byron's hero has the sex urge but is quite free of the Satanism. He goes unpunished throughout the poem; indeed, he appears to have no more abiding feelings for the ladies he loves than sentimental memory.

BUT THIS IS SURELY because he is only the occasion for editorial intervention. This is what makes the poem so 18th-century in tone; not for Byron 17th-century credulity and passion. He speaks with an accent recognisable in our century as well as the 18th—dry, humorous and self-effacing. It is quite impossible to imagine this Don Juan going down to Hell or cheating his manservant as Don Giovanni does Leporello. At the end of the poem, Juan does encounter the supernatural in the form of the ghostly friar of Lord and Lady Amundeville's Norman Abbey, but the apparition turns out to be only the randy Duchess of Fitz-Fulke disguised for an assignation. Except for its aristocratic demeanour, this Don Juan story is told more from the point of view of Sganarelle or Leporello. Readers are advised to put aside all memories of "*il dissoluto punito*", to quote the alternative title of Mozart's opera, when reading Byron's poem. Byron mentions Mozart once in the poem, and in Canto Three Haidée has a brief Mad Scene which leads one to speculate on what an opportunity the hard-pressed 19th-century librettists missed in not basing an opera on the Juan/Haidée story. The satirical tone of the poem must have kept Romani and the rest from appreciating its highly operatic ingredients. After all, Rossini made an opera from Walter Scott's poem, *The Lady of the Lake,* and Verdi did the same for *The Two Foscari* and *The Corsair*. I can only lament that we have no *Don Giovanni* by Donizetti to set beside Mozart's. We have to make do with *Marino Faliero* and *Parisina.*

The second point concerns the versification of the poem. Whatever it was in Italian, *ottava rima* proved to be a revolutionary verse form in English—at least, in Byron's hands. The entire poem, with only two lyrical interpolations in shorter measures, is in *ottava rima*—iambic pentameter lines rhyming alternately a/b for the first six lines and finished off with a couplet. This is much more likely to lead to comic verse than the nine-line stanza with an Alexandrine employed in *Childe Harold.* The clinching couplet encourages Byron to sum up in each stanza, though he is wonderfully adept in moving his poem on from stanza to stanza. The nature of rhymed stanzas is to encourage comment, diversion and sub-plot, to impede the pure narrative flow, so that the story of *Don Juan* (or of *Orlando Furioso, Gerusalemme Liberata* and *The Faerie Queene*, for that matter) could be told in a third the length in one of the more straightforward, narrative-conveying forms of Epic, or even in the looser forms of folk poetry. Elaboration into stanzas and rhyme-events is a sophistication of modern and urban societies, not, as is sometimes thought, a form of primitivism. It is a sure sign that the long poem has passed from an heroic to a social function.

Generally, Byron provides the right number of syllables per line. This is worth stressing, since the

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verse has earned the reputation of being very slapdash. But the apparent carelessness with rhymes and quantities is skilfully calculated, like a certain nonchalance in a gentleman's dress. Byron is one of the most professional craftsmen in English poetry and his ignoring of natural accents, his Cockney and split-word rhymes are devices for concentrating our attention or puncturing our moods of sententiousness. The vernacular becomes its own judge and measure. In *Don Juan*, Byron freed himself from the two artificialities of his age—special poetic diction, which remained the curse of Shelley, and "the language of men" which Wordsworth advocated and was so idealised nobody ever spoke it. If the language of *Don Juan* remains, in Auden's phrase, "a cotton frock" against a Milton's or a Shakespeare's gorgeous velvet garments, it none the less can clothe Byron's vision in true poetry. It has speed, ease of reference, wit and pathos. It is one of the best of natural tongues in a fallen world, and reads as audaciously today as it did in 1820.

I've already stressed that, throughout the poem, Byron is happy to turn from whatever his plot demands to some consideration of England and the English. We learn, even in passing, that the pump which nearly saves Juan's ship in Canto Two came from the workshop of the world—

But for the pumps: I'm glad to make them known
To all the brother tars who have need hence,
For fifty tons of water were upthrown
By them per hour, and they had all been undone,
But for the maker, Mr Mann, of London.

The Haidée idyll recalls Byron's own early love affairs, and he writes with unequalled tenderness of such first affections. After Haidée's death, as he puts it,

the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

I shall pass over the Gulbayaz Cantos and the scenes at the siege of the Turkish fortress at Ismail, other than to stress how close the second is to the old woman's tale in Voltaire's *Candide*. Byron is reminded of his first visit to the site of Troy, its countryside fallen into ruin, despite the fabled names it bore—Mt Ida, the river Scamander, and so on—

but where I sought for Ilion's walls,
The quiet sheep feeds, and the tortoise crawls.

Referring to Turkish polygamy, he remembers with irony his own unhappy marriage:

Why don't they knead two virtuous souls for life
Into that moral centaur, man and wife?

This middle part of the poem is written with less concentration and audacity than either the early or the late cantos, though even here Byron cannot write dully. He anticipates later generations of English readers trying to cope with the heroes and heroines of 19th-century Russian novels.

Achilles self was not more grim and gory
Than thousands of this new and polished nation
Whose names want nothing but pronunciation.

The battle scenes are almost the equal of the shipwreck ones in Canto Two for realism and sardonic reflection. Despite the tone of witty remonstrance, the account of the taking of Ismail is sufficiently grim, with no effort spared to report the horrors of war.

CANTO NINE opens with the great lines on the Duke of Wellington. This philippic is one of the finest pieces of polemic in English poetry. Byron may not be fair to the great Duke but he is accurate in condemning the *effect* of Wellington's victories throughout Europe. "Repairing legitimacy's crutch", he called it, and with secret police swarming through Paris and Vienna, and Metternich knitting together the forces of repression for another century, Byron was prescient enough about the unfortunate results of British victory in the Napoleonic wars. He forecast that Britain would become the most detested and envied nation in Europe in the latter part of the century.

From St Petersburg, Juan sets out for England, as a sort of private emissary of the Russian court—and immediately Byron's mood clears and we scent the pleasure with which he approaches London, the scene of his great amatory and literary triumphs only a few years previously. While on the Dover Road, Juan apostrophises the English people in words which have the authentic accent of his creator; but before this we get an unforgettable picture of London itself.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
Could reach, and here and there a sail just skipping
In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
On tip-toe through their sea-coal canopy;
A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
On a fool's head—and there is London Town!

Byron allots hundreds of stanzas to a loving celebration of the town, its rakes, its girls, its parasites—above all, its fashions and pleasures. However much he may have insisted in his Italian exile that he detested his nation, his mind could not keep away from it. He wrote home from Ravenna that "ridicule is the only weapon that the English climate cannot rust", and the last Cantos of *Don Juan* show him using that weapon with unrivalled resource. He calls England, "a low, newspaper, humdrum, lawsuit

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country", and he is reminded that his wife is a perfect native bloom of this unnatural society.

Now hatred is by far the longest pleasure;
Men love in haste, but they detest at leisure.

Before he concentrates on the poem's last set-piece, the full house party at the country seat of Lord and Lady Amundeville, Byron surveys the fashionable world at his leisure. This was the society he reigned over—the world of his affairs and letters, the intrigues with Lady Caroline Lamb, Lady Oxford and Lady Melbourne—but also where the booksellers and the *Quarterly Review* were important fixtures. Few poets of genius have been so firmly in fashionable society as Byron was. Pope had friends in high places, but his contact with society was more a matter of politics and Palladian enthusiasm. Byron swam through London like a golden fish in a bowl.

He is no Juvenal: his satire is tempered with enough good humour to be accused of connivance. When he draws a picture of a society flirt, he does so playfully.

Such is your cold coquette, who can't say "No",
And won't say "yes", and keeps you on and
offing
On a lee-shore, till it begins to blow—
Then sees your heart wreck'd with an inward
scoffing.
This works a world of sentimental woe,
And sends new Werters yearly to their coffin;
But yet is merely innocent flirtation,
Not quite adultery, but adulteration.

Having triumphed in town society, Juan has next to penetrate that ultimate mystery—the landed classes retired to their estates. He accepts the invitation of Sir Henry and Lady Adeline to stay at their country seat. The Norman Abbey where the house party assembles is presented in terms not unworthy of Pope in his "Timon's Villa" vein. Restorations, Revivals and the cult of the picturesque have all left their mark on this prodigious place, and Byron has fun cataloguing the pictures of past lords and kinsfolk in the gallery. At last, the guests arrive, and a splendid parcel of Anglo-Saxon attitudes they make up. It's a pity that he took against Sidney Smith: the apostrophising of this remarkable man is almost the only time in *Don Juan* when I feel discomforted by Byron. Peacock, for instance, though not mentioned in the poem, saw eye to eye with Byron, but was no sycophant. Byron sent Peacock a rose after the publication of *Nightmare Abbey*, to show that he bore no ill-will. And, indeed, Peacock's *Melincourt* and *Crotchet Castle*, though written in prose, are the only works in English which have some of the same lightness and prodigality of Byron's best poetry. The offending lines about Sidney Smith go thus:

The very powerful parson, Peter Pith,
The loudest wit I e'er was deafened with.

Perhaps one should reflect that wits don't suffer rivals near the throne. Samuel Butler loathed Bernard Shaw the most of his acquaintance, and Shaw announced himself Butler's disciple.

I SAID AT THE OUTSET that I would concern myself with these last cantos of *Don Juan* because I find them so obviously a teeming source of Byron's concern with England. I also acknowledged them to be satires. Yet I must admit that Byron lacks the firm, not to say the fanatic, ground on which hard satire is based. The worst crime he could remember in exile, when he thought of England, was hypocrisy. Years before, making his maiden speech in the Lords, he could think of worse things. The sheer misery of the English working classes was not something Byron could imagine in Italy—though Shelley could. I am sure that exile makes one idealise, even under the name of satire and distaste, one's homeland. Byron sums up the attitudes of the people he is portraying in terms not too severe—not even very censorious:

If all these seem a heterogeneous mass
To be assembled at a country seat,
Yet think, a specimen of every class
Is better than a humdrum tête-à-tête.
The days of Comedy are gone, alas!
When Congreve's fool could vie with Molière's
bête:
Society is smooth'd to that excess,
That manners hardly differ more than dress.

Our ridicules are kept in the background—
Ridiculous enough, but also dull;
Professions, too, are no more to be found
Professional; and there is nought to cull
Of folly's fruit; for though your fools abound,
They're barren, and not worth the pains to pull.
Society is now one polish'd horde,
Form'd of two mighty tribes, the Bores *and* Bored.

Lady Adeline sets out match-making for Juan, and Byron enjoys the prospect of describing the likely women. Then there is a sort of Trimalchio's Feast, with the natural British qualification of mixing expediency with gluttony. Juan is paired off with a Catholic Bluestocking—and Byron is left with opportunity to score off the fashion for ghost stories and tales of High Gothic melodrama. His ghosts are as palpable as Peacock's or Jane Austen's.

The poem ends in mid-air—literally, since Juan's hand has fastened on the breast of the Duchess of Fitz-Fulke, whose intention is in no sense necromantic. The modern reader must have mixed feelings about the poem's final ambiguous image. These last cantos were written when Byron's mind was hardening to his Greek

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enterprise. His mind had become more sombre: it's as if he forecast his approaching death. His letters show a dark and disturbed cast of thought. But *Don Juan* becomes more facetious at the end. I find it hard to imagine how Byron could have continued it in Greece, even if he hadn't died quite soon after arriving in Epirus. I don't subscribe to the theory that each great artist's death is a neat Q.E.D. supplied by the shears of Atropos (Mozart and Schubert were bitter at what they hadn't done and knew they could do) but sometimes fate helps an artist out of his creative dilemma. Byron had more to say about England and he would probably have said it facetiously. But it would have had to wait until he finished the business of freeing Greece. And who can say what form it would have taken? In the event, Byron's death at Missolonghi led to the establishment of an independent Greece. If the public in England hadn't been stirred by his death, it's doubtful that the British Government would have ordered the Mediterranean Fleet to destroy the Turks at the battle of Navarino. Byron was at the height of his powers —Donny Johnny's adventures might have gone as far afield as America, or perhaps the moon, in imitation of Ariosto, but the clockwork was halted permanently. Byron's death could be represented as the triumph of the "romantic" myth-maker over the "realist" poet. But the sixteen existing cantos of *Don Juan* are a legacy which the world at large and England in particular can never be too grateful for. They have sealed forever the energy and resource of the English people, seen at a time when they were on the verge of becoming the rulers of the world. And we, in our post-Imperial age, can only envy the power and certainty of that extraordinary time.

Gaiety & Lamentation

The Defeat of John Berryman—By DOUGLAS DUNN

MOST OF THOSE who have written on John Berryman's poems have found it reasonable to assume that his work poses—even postures—as "difficult." It has been considered a poetry for which certain clues must be known beforehand in order to gain access, let alone understanding. Martin Dodsworth's article, in *The Survivial of Poetry*,[1] was called "John Berryman: An Introduction", suggesting, by its title and method, that here was a poet who must be subjected to elementary critical exposure before any attempt by a less-critical public to read him. And Edward Mendelson's contribution to the subject is called "How to read Berryman's *Dream Songs*",[2] the implication being that readers have stumbled, or misunderstood, in the past, and that more than a chair (not the university kind) and a copy of the books is required.

The problem is partly Berryman's fault. He complained in prefaces and in interviews that his work was discussed in wrong ways, that critics missed the point. As well as that, readers, and critics, especially British ones, have been put off by Berryman's syntax and orthography. Even worse, his scholarly affectations, his cultural reach, not only manifest themselves in poems as allusive details, but are held by some to be the stiffening in a larger theological argument. Few British readers can take *that* seriously. These indifferent reactions are the grumbling of an Age without vision. They can be held to one side. What must be asserted about Berryman's work is its humanity. Berryman himself may have thought that beside the point too; but it is what, in my opinion, is strongest in his poems.

Christopher Ricks writes that "the *Dream Songs* can't but be a theodicy",[3] which means they constitute a defence of God's goodness in spite of the disasters and pain inflicted on the poet who makes the defence. I don't see that. There is so much blasphemy and doubt in *Dream Songs* that its religious dimensions come across as an absence of faith, as spiritual torture. Of Henry, the protagonist of *Dream Songs*, Berryman said in a published conversation with Richard Kostelanetz:[4]

> The point in Henry was to investigate a man with many opportunities, far more than those allowed to the lover in the *Bradstreet* poem—many chances to observe and see what people of various nations are like, and what they do and are, and so on. Now Henry is a man with, God knows, many faults, but among them is not self-understanding. He believes in his enterprise. He is suffering and suffering heavily and has to. That can't be helped. And he

[1] Faber, 1970.
[2] In *American Poetry, since 1960*. Edited by ROBERT B. SHAW. Carcanet Press, £3.50.
[3] *The Massachusetts Review*, Spring 1970.
[4] *Paris Review*, Winter 1972.

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> has a friend, Mr Bones, but the friend is some friend. He's like Job's Comforter. Remember the three who pretend to be Job's friends. They sit down and lament with him, and give him the traditional Jewish jazz—namely, you suffer, therefore you are guilty. . . . Well, Henry's friend sits down and gives him the same business. Henry is so troubled and bothered by his many problems that he never acutally comes up with solutions, and from that point of view the poem is a failure. . . .

The religious correspondences are obvious enough; but for the theodicy argument to stand, Berryman would have had to admit to a "solution", to a positive religious attitude. Throughout his work, Berryman had said earlier in the conversation, there "is a tendency to regard the individual soul under stress." But to claim this as a religious intention, in the *Dream Songs*, is to take matters too far. Professor Ricks detected an aspect of Berryman's interests which was only to become positive and dominant in *Love & Fame* and *Delusions etc.*

Part of Ricks's theodicy argument is a comparison between Tennyson's *In Memoriam* and *Dream Songs*. Dedicated to "the sacred memory of Delmore Schwartz", lamenting the fates of Jarrell, Blackmur, Roethke and other friends, cherishing dozens of precious literary and cultural heroes, the *Dream Songs* are undoubtedly haunted by elegiac feeling. But Berryman's own ploy with Henry, described in his words above, ought to complicate purely elegiac or religious definitions of the work. The poem appears to me cast on lines closer to Byron's *Don Juan*.

One can justify that suggestion in several ways. First, the nature of the poem's construction, its insinuation of spontaneity, a writing according to the pressures of the day whether actual or remembered, its frequent comedies, and its use of musical-sounding verse for loosely narrative functions. Second, in place of satire, Berryman's temperament found literary elegy more natural. The proximity of the two kinds is probably closer than those uninterested in classical forms realise. Both literary satire and literary elegy tend to lament the imperfections of an Age, and the injustice of Fate. Yet mere suggestion of antecedents, while it might help provoke an understanding of Berryman's literary temperament, is more likely to emphasise that *Dream Songs* is a hybrid, a modern *poem*, and, in the context of Berryman's career of thoughts and feelings, one phase of his life's argument.

BERRYMAN'S LIFE-IN-HIS-POEMS has been probed, about as far as is decent. The poems ask for this. Autobiography was an adjunct of his understanding of Fame. But Henry is so unanimously accepted as Berryman himself that the imaginative function of the person-who-behaves-like-the-self in a poem has been neglected.

The self-as-subject is one of the problems raised, not only by Berryman's work, but by many contemporary poetries, those of Plath and Lowell in particular. Michael Berryhill, in an interesting essay,[5] hints at a solution to the problem as it concerns Berryman. He refers to the idea of "couvade" in "Dream Song 124"—

> *Couvade was always Henry's favourite custom . . .*

As well as its meaning in anthropology, "couvade" also means "to brood, to do nothing." Both meanings are important in Berryman's work. There are many references to helplessness, inactivity, the state of being impractical and inert, bogged down in thought and considerations. And the degree of empathy, of "being another", which is involved in the anthropological meaning —when a man takes to an intuitive simulation of child-bearing during his mate's real pregnancy— is exactly the degree of sympathy Berryman enacts, not only towards other people, but to Henry. Berryman is not Henry; but Henry *is* Berryman. Yet Henry, I speculate, is produced

[5] "The Epistemology of Loss" in Richard J. Kelly, *John Berryman: a Checklist*. Scarecrow Press, 1972.

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imaginatively, by a process in which psychological and imaginative necessities are satisfied together, not only as a cipher, or mask, through which Berryman can speak, but as, if you like, a "poet's friend." Out of his real self, Berryman drew another person who is, intuitively, and perhaps for psychological reasons I cannot pretend to understand, as like the real Berryman as makes no difference.

Whether this process results in a creation that can be called a "literary device" is questionable. It appears to be more personal, more to do with the nature of the poet's mind, and the consolations it needs to compensate for solitude and the nature of what he knows about himself. It could also be said to be fundamental in a poetry in which the self is exploited through imaginative recreations—as in Jarrell's monologues. Jarrell, writing "The Woman at the Washington Zoo", could have said, as Berryman did of his student in "Dream Song 242"—

When she got
control, I said "What's the matter—if you want to talk?"
"Nothing. Nothing's the matter." So.
I am her.

The writing here is even like Jarrell's. But in Berryman's circumstances, the implications of personal inter change, of a dangerous benevolence, are even more interesting, because more original. They are taken even further. Consider the despair, the predicament, of a man whose disciplined and large intellect allowed him to create an imaginary friend out of himself, whose fears, guilts, doubts and escapades he could describe and condemn. And is not that despair, that predicament, the substance of Berryman's writing? More than that, though. Is it not also a consequence of Berryman's creation of "other-Berryman", of Henry, that we consider the psychology behind it as perhaps an extreme instance of the dilemma of the contemporary poet, brought partially into the open, as it is here, by poetic form, by a technique which can be tentatively explained in psychological terms? Or the dilemma of a contemporary poet willing to face up to the turbulence of his life, of lives in general, in the context of what Valéry called "the most difficult of all the arts"? For Berryman never allowed his personal difficulties to intrude on an enduring fascination with metrics and all the stylistic problems of poems.

Homage to Mistress Bradstreet shows the beginnings of this psycho-technical literary feat. Berryman creates an imaginary life out of a real life, manufacturing predicaments said to be Anne's and her lover's, but personal to Berryman, invented by him, and to which he can respond—

O all your ages at the mercy of my loves
together lie at once, forever or
so long as I happen.

It is also in *Homage to Mistress Bradstreet* that Berryman's "crumpled syntax" first makes itself obtrusive. His interest in a distinctive grammar dates from much earlier. In *Love & Fame*, he records the impact of a sentence from a review by R. P. Blackmur, read in the mid-'thirties while still an undergraduate—

"The art of poetry
is amply distinguished from the manufacture of verse
by an animating presence in the poetry
of a fresh idiom: language

so twisted and posed in a form
that it not only expresses the matter in hand
but adds to the stock of available reality."
I was never altogether the same man after that.

MORE INTERESTINGLY, Berryman says in his *Paris Review* interview that Saul Bellow's *Adventures of Augie March* gave him the inspiration for *Homage to Mistress Bradstreet*. Berryman probably meant this in the sense of creative impetus, the will to contribute to an exciting phase of American writing. The nature of Bellow's long and brilliant novel is pertinent, too. For one thing, it is delivered in the first person. *Augie March*, says Sidney Finkelstein, "has something of the character of a farewell to social responsibility," which is replaced by a sense of the world as absurd. Its damage can be held off by unscrupulousness, by laughter, by participation in absurdity, garrulously flowing with the world's tide as a means of staying sane on one hand, and of critically observing the nature of realities as the other objective. Such a stance, in poetry, avoids omniscience and hasty indignation.

Merely to recognise the world as absurd does not preclude suffering. Berryman's is a poetry of pain. It is about dying, about thwarted life, in which gaiety and lamentation, in almost equal proportions, or merged, seem equally pointless. Suicide is pondered so often in Berryman's poems that the opening sentence of Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus* echoes with unsurprising inevitability—"There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide." Those who, like Claude Mauriac, considered Camus's theory of the absurd an argument which helped lead them from the spiritual confusion with which they had been struggling, testified, and still testify, despite the fresh popularities of Marxisms, to the political and spiritual agonies of the times.

MORE AND MORE it seems that the absence of a unifying intellectual system, one which possesses all the virtues of a humane philosophy, is responsible for the tortuous self-examination of writers.

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The European psyche and intelligence have had radical socialisms and fascisms to hang on to, as well as usually more placid religious or nationalist orthodoxies and conservatisms. Positive demands for political resistance have also been made. Yet the American writer has been unable to face these options with quite the same confidence; or, rather, quite the same version of the lack of it. He has been forced to rely on himself, fearing, as did Berryman, "the increasingly fanatical Americans" but unwilling to enter that same arena on an opposing platform, except that of the self-as-art—

Take my vices alike

with some of my virtues, if you can find any.
I stick up like Coriolanus with my scars
for mob inspection.
Only, dear, I am not running in any election

I am not my gifted egomaniacal ally N. Mailer

The sorrows *of the Hero, Alexander's.*
The terrors of the Saint,—
most people feel okay! Thoreau was wrong,
he judged by himself.

When I was fiddling later with every wife
on the Eastern seaboard
I longed to climb into a pulpit & confess.
Tear me to pieces!

Lincoln once wrote to a friend "I bit my lip & am quiet."

As a search for an individual and spiritual haven in which he could wait for the inevitable with an honest resignation, Berryman's poetry is a fair sample of a continuing phenomenon, albeit in his case magnified by genius. He writes about what it is like to possess formidable intelligence in a society where all aspirations appear negative, or frustrated from the start. His intelligence appears to have had no objective beyond that of writing poems. He recoils from public worsening, but not publicity. Personal disasters repeat themselves or return in shuddering, nerve-racking memories. His past is full of grief—his father's suicide, the deaths of his friends, his affairs and marriages. His drinking continues. His lapses of sanity come and go and recur. Yet all the time it is a poetry of waiting, a poetry of impending solutions, which were to come in the religious poems that close *Love & Fame*, and constitute much of *Delusions etc.* Early in the *Dream Songs*, we get

It is in the administration of rhetoric,
on these occasions, that—not the fathomless heart—
the thinky death consists;
his chest is pinched. The enemy are sick,
and so is us of. Often, to rising trysts,
like this one, drove he out
and the gasps of love, after all, had got him ready.
However things hurt, men hurt worse. He's stark
to be jerked onward?
Yes. In the headlights he got' keep him steady,
leak not, look out over. This' hard work
boss, wait' for The Word.

If Berryman was waiting for the imminence of the conditions on which he could be granted religious faith, parallel with this sometimes bitter, sometimes humorous, sometimes agonised patience, he also expected his own premature death. It is a death that arises from thinking, knowing, and the inability to do—

Henry was morbid, inactive & a child to Angst . . .

Not only does he imagine Henry writing as dead, but in "Dream Song 90, op. posth. no. 13", an elegy for Jarrell, he says

The panic died and in the panic's dying
so did my old friend. I am headed west
also, also somehow.

One can long for one's own death, almost as a point of etiquette, when writing an elegy for a beloved friend. Berryman would be drawn to that; his powers of identification, his "cosmic sympathies", would expect it of him. Yet he takes his own death seriously, with morbid humour, rescuing Henry as an act of perseverance, as a will to continue against odds, even if the gesture is unconvincing. The fourteen "op. posth." poems, pretending to be from beyond the grave, contain some of his finest writing. "Dream Song 86" shows his masterful abilities as a mimic, a provider of voices, the work of a great poetic dramatist. It is to the service of *speaking*, of emphases and circumlocutions, that his unusual syntax is put.

Never able to collect his senses into a Stoic reasonableness, Berryman's confused and solitary *Angst* is not typical of extremity, of being different from others, but of everyday passions he had to live with. "The ordinariness of the days was what it was all about," says Saul Bellow in his gently incisive memoir that prefaces *Recovery*, Berryman's posthumous and incomplete novel, in its own right a remarkable dramatisation of the agonies of alcoholism. His poems are so close to a

AN AMERICAN TRILOGY

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sense of life, an imparting of truth complete with the bias of technique and personality, that they have the true flavour of fiction. An enormously comprehensive and unsentimental pathos slips out of his work, complicated and perplexing. We realise that although it may all be about ordinary Berryman, it generalises itself, it has compass.

His generous humanity is neglected by those who shy away from the oddness of his voice, or the grotesque inventions of his imagination. "Lunatic exotica," they say "Why, he always puts in an ampersand, and never writes 'and'. How can *that* be good?" But Berryman has much to say, wisely and with pleasure, of the human condition, as in "Dream Song 264", which begins

> *I always wanted to be old, I wanted to say*
> *"O I haven't read that for fifteen years"*
> *or "my copy of that*
> *seems in the usual course to have gone astray"*
> *or "She—that woman moved me to young tears,*
> *even Henry Cat."*

THE SERIOUSNESS with which Berryman engaged with the problems of writing, of achieving a contemporary idiom as a matter of priority, is what marks him off from most British talents. At times, his erudition on the subject of styles, practical though it was, is inhibiting. In his *Sonnets* especially, though elsewhere too, he courts the traditions of writing as self-consciously as he seeks the truths of experience. The tension in such a method is familiar from the modernism of Eliot and Pound. It is no novelty.

Yet Berryman's appreciation of creativity is a despairing one. It does him no good in the midst of his troubles. It even helps to make them. "The original crime," he wrote—"art, rime." Later in the *Dream Songs* he amplifies on this,

> *Wait the lime-pits for all originators,*
> *wounded propped up to be executed,*
> *afterwards known as martyrs,*

a view which appears to be in abject opposition to the facetious confidence with which he refers to his "large work, which will appear, and baffle everybody." But the willingness to amaze, to annoy and put off stride, is a consequence of his perception of "originators" as inevitably fated to sordid "execution", followed by indecently swift and philistine canonisation.

Alienated writers, *i.e.* all contemporary writers with a proper knowledge of what contemporaneity is, do not seek repose. They know it will not be granted on the honest terms of art. It would involve compromise with ideologies, communist or capitalist (as they are practised); and, by compromising, they would subordinate the freedom inherent in the nature of art to totalitarian decision on one hand, and the freedom to buy and sell on the other. Instead, a poet like Berryman looks for revenge in the name of art, and longs for the reform of caricatured cultural processes in societies which uphold them as constituent parts of their order. That, or something like it, is a fundamental position behind Berryman's work. He is a political poet without politics.

Of the struggle to work against pressures of personal and artistic difficulties, he wrote,

> *Hunger was constitutional with him,*
> *women, cigarettes, liquor, need need need*
> *until he went to pieces.*
> *The pieces sat up and wrote. They did not heed*
> *their piecedom but kept very quietly on*
> *among the chaos.*

"But kept very quietly on"—Berryman felt it necessary to say that formality and mannerisms, habitual skill, controlled his personal disintegration for literature. He took personal and artistic pride in being both self-consciously *maudit* as well as accomplished, "the steadiest man on the Block" for some things.

In "Dream Song 310" he began, "His gift receded. He could write no more." Plagued with literary exhaustion at several points in his life, in this poem it leads him to consider Goethe's advice to idle "when no theme presents itself." He then modulates to German literature generally. Kafka provides him with,

> *Henry, monstrous bug, laid himself down*
> *on the machine in the penal colony*
> *without a single regret,*

just as Kafka gave him the first line in the previous quotation. Other literature is a catalyst to his despair. He is the victim of his reading. His worries metamorphose it to life in his imagination. His quandaries multiply. He inserts himself into other writers' images; or into images from films ("Dream Songs 7 and 9", for instance); or into the idiom of blues singers and jazz musicians,

> *we will blow our best,*
> *our sad wild riffs come easy in that case...*

posed against the idiom of Elizabethan drama.

Demotic American culture and the "valiant art" of literary and musical heroes are all part of his wayward mixture of styles, which he enjoyed to blend and contrast. "This writing," he appears to say, "is like the varieties of the world, its madnesses. Drive-ins and Hölderlin; cigarettes and Kafka; high-yaller whores and the duel between John Day and Henry Porter; Strindberg and blues; Humphrey Bogart and St Anselm."

Avoiding pomposity, Berryman's sense of humour is the sort, he said, "fatal to bardic pretension." A sweep as mundane, carnal and sacred as Berryman's, so many things at once, not only deflated any tendency to indulge in high rhetoric—giving us a "monotonous sublime" that

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pretended not to be monotonous—but heightened his serious moods, adding an awkward earnestness. It was all part of his *performance*, a bravado of both high and low spirits.

ENRAPTURED BY self-destructive necessities, Berryman sought consolation in theology, literature and philosophy; and these became part of the rapture. Final consolation arrived in the form of Catholicism, a religion he had known as a boy. Of God, he writes with an idiom and simplicity of reverence reminiscent of Stevie Smith—

You have come to my rescue again & again
in my impassable, sometimes despairing years.
You have allowed my brilliant friends to destroy themselves
and I am still here, severely damaged, but functioning.

Unknowable, as I am unknown to my guinea-pigs:
but how can I "love" you?
I only as far as gratitude & awe
confidently and absolutely go.

His religious poems in *Love & Fame* are intended to "criticise backward" the earlier, scandalous sections; and, presumably, the carnality, comedy and religious doubts of *Dream Songs* as well. The religious conscience which had said of a Saint's Day—

We celebrate her feast with our caps on,
whom God has not visited—

converted the invisible God of appeal to one palpably of rescue. His new spiritual situation demanded penitence, which he says he couldn't muster, not even for the promise of glory. Berryman may have discovered faith, and its attendant certainties; but a nervous edge, an incompletion, was to remain. Nor was his language to be greatly altered in these later poems. It is still "mixed" and quirky in "The Facts & Issues."

Berryman's manic grasp at salvation and safety can be respected; at least, it is by me. Yet I cannot help but count myself among those whom Berryman realised would not "buy" his answers, those whom Berryman said were "deluded", who will say in return Berryman was "deluded" too. Poets are tricked by their emergencies. Their talents are stunted and held back by an insurmountable political and spiritual impasse. Mere decision is insufficient to overcome it. No idealism, no forecast, no vision; they have somehow become unclean. Poets can still rise out of their miseries to mourn and condemn large tragedies, for which there is a monstrous appetite—the Camps, Viet Nam, Ulster. But to alter the psychologies that make them possible?

To move even tentatively in that direction calls for such an active participation in the atmosphere of the times, a comprehensive literature of insult and recommendation, that its difficulty withholds poets from the attempt. "Alienation" is now a commonplace. We take it for granted that a poet walks in a different direction from that of the society he lives in. "How could it be otherwise" we ask, "when only commissars, lairds, captains of industry, the rich and the subservient, are satisfied by existing orders?"

It is probably true to say that poets like Berryman, ambitious poets who honour poetry by attempts at odyssey and who picture "the individual soul under stress", become alienated not only from external society, but that the man who writes grows to despise the man who lives. The whole business ends in the agony of attempting to salvage one's own soul, in turning one's back on the profane; and in seeking, not to embody or criticise, but to worship the unknowable, in a tragic evasion of causes.

WHAT OF THE WORLD Berryman turned his back on, which defeated him? Of death and the "extremist poets", Lowell, in his glowing and affectionate memorial to Berryman in *The New York Review of Books*, said—

> "Were they killed, as standard radicals say, by our corrupted society? Was their success an aspect of their destruction? Were we uncomfortable epigoni of Frost, Pound, Eliot, Marianne Moore, etc.? This bitter possibility came to us at the moment of our *arrival*. Death comes sooner or later, these made it sooner."

His late conversion—not his death, which is Berryman's business—involved a partial "rescue" which is more significant than a claim that God intervened on his behalf, his own literal understanding of it. He willed it. It proves the honesty of his anguish at the cruelty of the world, the competition without kindness. Yet it derives from fatigue. Poets, defeated by their material, withdraw into their own exhaustion. Those who read their work, without the slightest intention of allowing it to bother them, look at this exhaustion, at the poet, a pitiful heap of vices, exasperations and hopes, and call the heap an illustration of "the strength of the human spirit," mentioning, perhaps, "the alienation of the artist", because they have been told. The world suffers no loss at the death of a poet. It paid little attention to him when he lived. There appears to be no end to the defeats poetry must continue to face.

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MEMOIR

R. H. S. Crossman

The Pop Columnist

By Hugh Cudlipp

"HOW LONG? How many words?"

"Eight-hundred-and-fifty."

"Good God. How many subjects?"

"Four normally, three in a lively week, one alone in a tumultuous week of national crises or international confrontation. Eight-hundred-and-fifty words in all, war or peace, government or dissolution, Second Coming or Judgment Day."

"Good God. Can it be done?"

"If it's twice as long, half as many people will read it. Fatal."

"Well", said Dick, "we don't want that to happen, do we?"

The only question he didn't ask—as Clem Attlee, who couldn't communicate with anybody, always did—was "How much?", though Dick, M.P., wasn't offended when I told him the fee. Fourteen or fifteen million readers would soon be aware of our contract or compact, so there was no suggestion on my part or his of confidentiality. Nothing for the B.B.C., or Granada TV, or the *Sunday Times* to worry about: a journalist, though he may also be a Member of Parliament, is worthy of his hire. There were no forgotten letters, or letters to forget or regret.

Cecil King first suggested R. H. S. Crossman might make a good contributor for the popular *Sunday Pictorial* now and then. (Curious people, these Wykehamists: what really went on at that austere, monastic school in Hampshire which spawned such diversities—usually suspicious of each other—as Crossman, King, Hugh Gaitskell, Douglas Jay and Oswald Mosley?) The "Crossman Column" was evolved by Dick and me, discussing the subjects in advance, chopping and changing, elucidating, but not for long. He mastered the art or craft in no time at all, then discovered his major problem as the first and most lucid tabloid don was no longer to write with brevity and crystal clarity for the masses but to spin out the same knowledge and current opinion at what now seemed to him to be inordinate length for *New Statesman* readers.

His praise for my part of the act was overlavish; after all, it was merely to say "I don't understand this" or "I understand it but our 15,000,000 readers won't" or "Nobody, including you, can explain that subject in 200 words." For this modest contribution he dedicated one of his books "To my two favourite Editors, K.M. and H.C.", and he goes further. After an unsatisfactory lunch with an Editor more interested in the non-political wares of the Mirror Supermarket (what were they? old men forget), Dick wrote in his diary: "But oh dear! Now I know more than ever before that it's only God's decision that Hugh Cudlipp should not fall down dead tomorrow which preserves me on the *Mirror*." The Column was always good, but there was no evidence so far as I knew of direct intervention by the Almighty in the conduct of the *Sunday Pictorial*: Sunday was His day of rest.

THE COMPULSIVE COMMUNICATOR, self-styled, relished talking to anybody on any subject he could rustle up at any hour, day or night, yet his favourite captive audience were the people who hadn't been to Winchester and New College and didn't know Greek from Latin: they were *really* worth teaching. He grasped the ground rules of the game as a WEA teacher, but it was his *Sunday Pictorial* (later *Daily Mirror*) column that elevated him to maestro status in an arena sparsely populated by intellectuals.

Dick's Pop Column—instant appraisal, instant verdict, instant indiscretion—landed him in more trouble with his Labour Party comrades than his speeches in or out of the Commons or on the Party platform. There could be no hedging in the Column, no qualification, no subtle evasion or innuendo: it (whatever It might be) either was or wasn't, should be or shouldn't. The end-product was that hell was let loose by his victims with a speed and malevolence which occasionally alarmed (I did not say dismayed) the columnist.

Only a political tyro or a rash intellectual would look a block vote in the eye. Yet Crossman was naively surprised—I wrongly suspected simulated innocence—when his assessment of the brainpower and acumen of M.P.s sponsored by trade unions made him a marked man for the rest of his life with that powerful, sensitive, and revengeful body of men. Oh dear, all he had written (*Daily Mirror*, July 1957) was that their quality had declined. "Of 97 sponsored trade union M.P.s in Parliament today only four—Griffiths, Bevan, Brown, and Robens—suggest themselves for key jobs. In contrast, Mr Attlee in 1945 was able to allot eight important Ministries to sponsored trade unionists."

Left-wing intellectuals were anathema to the parliamentary group of trade union M.P.s: and left-wing intellectuals writing for popular newspapers even more so. They unanimously deplored the irresponsible attack ("But it's true, that's why

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they're furious", said Dick) and noted that his subsequent article fell far short of an apology; the group therefore requested the national executive (of which Crossman was a member) to take note of his conduct. Having one's conduct "taken note of" is not the path to glory or high office among the brothers.

Crossman was instinctively aware of the value of the Column in his own constituency and among the rank and file. "Now I'm writing for a popular paper they realise I matter at last." The blow-up with Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary Bevin, over Middle East policy in 1949 taught him its power and peril among the higher echelon.

The crusader for Zionism cabled the piece from Palestine, a blockbusting indictment—no more, no less—of Bevin's view of the situation and of the wrong-headed obduracy of his policy. It began: "It's time for straight talking." The straight talking inexorably followed and the article closed:

> "The most probable end of the affair will be a humiliating British climb-down unless of course we get a new Foreign Secretary who will restore our shattered Middle East prestige by recognising Israel and collaborating in the economic development which is the only basis for a Jewish-Arab conciliation."

I expanded the Column to front-page shop-window display, and the headline bellowed in a voice as raucous as Ernie's—"**I ACCUSE BEVIN, by Richard Crossman, M.P.**". It was political streaking. Hell was let loose yet again by the tabloid don and Bevin never forgave him.

The front-page incident gave me an opportunity to correct some of the sillier readers, the crackpots and Fascists who wrote in denouncing Dick as a Jewish something-or-other whenever he supported the Zionist cause. How to do this without racial undertones which might imply a sop to the anti-Semitic? Well, I tried: "Both Arab and Jewish versions of the Palestine problem have always been suspect as partisan. Crossman—neither Arab nor Jew—is violently anti-Bevin on this issue, but has always striven to write the truth as he sees it." For good measure I threw in a reference to Richard Howard Stafford Crossman as a member of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into the Palestine problem. "Burly, blond and bespectacled, he is the son of a High Court Judge, had a distinguished career at Oxford, and was awarded the O.B.E. for his wartime Allied propaganda work." Dammit, man, how much more English could he be than Bertie Wooster or Kitchener of Khartoum?

Dick said to me retrospectively: "Hugh, that Column on Palestine wouldn't have caused a ripple if it had been presented inconspicuously in its usual graveyard on page ten. Ernie wouldn't have seen it and wouldn't have read it, anyway."

"Yes, Dick, I know. That's why I put it on page one."

MICHAEL FOOT, in his farewell to Richard Crossman in *Tribune* recalls "a period in the 'fifties, in the midst of our Bevanite or post-Bevanite quarrels, when we thought that Dick had become much too impressed with the power and authority of the *Daily Mirror* for which he was working. . . ." What impressed Crossman about the *Mirror* was not its power and authority, an arguable proposition never overstated by those

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who laboured in the vineyard, but its desire and ability to explain the inexplicable and to render the incomprehensible intelligible. Lord Crowther and Sir John Newsom both wrote to me letters of surprised gratitude to acknowledge the paper for what they both described as the best condensations in words, verve and presentation of their Reports on Education: it was the WEA element in the *Mirror*, conducted by five or six of us—Sydney Jacobson, John Beavan, Alan Fairclough, Deryck Winterton, Geoffrey Goodman—that appealed to the tabloid don and the compulsive communicator.

As Minister of Health and Social Security in 1968 he invited me to his office in Elephant & Castle for an early talk about the technical and tortuous White Paper on his revolutionary scheme for wage-related retirement pensions.

"Can there be a popular version the Government itself can officially issue?"

I said: "Good God. How many words?"

I devised a simple scheme: (1) question and answer, so that the public will turn only to the facts that concerned them individually; (2) sticking religiously to the words and deeds of the civil servants though deleting or compressing the complexities; (3) plus a few graphics that even a child, or at any rate one with O-levels, could understand. John Beavan and Alan Fairclough departed to a hotel in Brighton for three days to deliver the packaged goods.

The Minister communicated on 18 December, 1968: "Dear Hugh, I must write to thank you (and through you Alan Fairclough and John) for a really monumental piece of work. As you know I had acquired at the *Pic* fairly high standards by which to measure skill at accurate and precise popularisation. Despite every effort the Department has been unable to fault your team on any substantial point though we have found one or two additions we want to make as well as one or two deletions of what seemed to us on second thoughts sentences which introduced complications unnecessary in a popular version. But as you will see when you get it back, our final, which we are sending for your scrutiny, is basically your original version. *Yours*, DICK CROSSMAN."

I was peeved when Dick in a public speech referred to himself as the *Daily Mirror's* fig-leaf: even Editors-in-Chief have their feelings. Of course, he was right; but the fig-leaf theory was the beginning of a luxuriant fig-tree. The Crossman Column begat the *Mirror* "Shock Issues" on sociological problems, which begat "Inside Page" —well informed and at its best as good as the *Evening Standard's* "Londoner's Diary"—which begat "Mirrorscope", a sort of mini *Sunday Times* supplement in the world's most popular "popular newspaper."

DICK CROSSMAN and the *Mirror* were never divorced; there was a temporary separation, with Dick returning later as a frequent and prominent contributor. A newspaper incapable of changing its mood has joined the queue outside the crematorium, and so it came to pass that when the Tories romped home on the "You've Never Had It So Good!" ticket in 1959, the newspaper inaugurated a happening later copied by the Chinese—a cultural revolution. It dropped its slogan "FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE"; the people *had* gone forward, and the difficulty now was to *keep them there*. "*Jane*", a daily strip-cartoon heroine whose dance of the seven veils had captivated the licentious soldiery during the Hitler war, was married off, sudden like, and the newspaper became hysterically and uncertainly gay. The Crossman Column vanished overnight, an unannounced and sinister phenomenon which was the cause of immediate comment and speculation.

Was the *Mirror* abandoning its support of the Labour movement? Was it eschewing politics? Had it dropped the Socialist pilot? The London *Evening Standard* sounded the alarm: "The Socialist defeat has brought about a major revolution in the *Daily Mirror* office . . . the *Mirror* may well fear the effects of backing a political loser on readership and advertising." The *Daily Worker* was delighted that its life-long suspicion of the *Mirror's* perfidy was at last exposed: "Instead of commenting on the election results and calling for support for the Labour Party, the *Mirror* said nothing", said the *Worker*. The *Guardian* called its piece "Jane Leads Right Turn": "Perhaps we are to assume that the people having refused to go in the right (or Left) direction, the *Mirror* is not going to press the point." Francis Williams informed the readers of the *New Statesman* that the Labour Party would appear not only to have lost the election but also to have lost the *Daily Mirror*, at any rate for the time being. Even *Tribune* shed a tear: "The rumour spreads down Fleet Street that henceforth the people will have to continue their Forward march without Hugh or Cecil as well as without Jane. *Tribune* would be happy to see the rumour killed—in our pages, or, better still, in theirs."

To let us all into a secret, the tabloid don was not surprised at the dropping of the Socialist pilot. The election was in October 1959; his contract expired in September; and I had written to him in August: "The *Mirror* is a newspaper which cannot, at any rate while I am still here, carry on with the same formula for ever. Whoever wins the next election, the country will be entering a militantly unpolitical period—rightly or wrongly. To continue on the same basis would be

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unwise all round. . . . If Labour wins the Election you will become a minister: if the Conservatives win, all newspapers, will have a problem, including this one. . . ." (Etc., etc., plus friendly arrangement.)

I learned this. Hiring Richard Howard Stafford Crossman, neither Arab nor Jew, created controversy but nothing like as much controversy as "firing" him. The board of the *New Statesman* will ruefully confirm.

Crossman & the *New Statesman*

By Paul Johnson

MY FIRST CONTACT with R. H. S. Crossman was when the telephone rang in my office at *Réalités*, the French monthly magazine. The year was 1953, I was twenty-four, and had recently been taken on as part-time Paris Correspondent of the *New Statesman*, which I then believed, and still do believe, to be the finest weekly paper in the world. The voice said: "This is Dick Crossman. I am in Paris. I have been instructed by Kingsley Martin to get to know you. I propose to take you out to dinner tonight. You shall choose the restaurant, which must be, in your opinion, the finest in this city. You will order the food and wines. I will foot the bill. I am in a position to do so, since I have just been paid an exorbitant fee for lecturing to the senior NATO staff on 'black propaganda.' Now, where shall we meet?"

I don't propose to name the restaurant, which is small, little-known, very expensive and, happily, still unchanged from those days. What we ate and drank I do not recall; indeed, I doubt if I noticed either at the time, though Dick consumed both in large quantities and with gusto. There are a few precious moments in one's life, which I think usually occur in the early twenties, when one is transported, as it were, into paradise. This, for me, was such an episode. I regarded Crossman as the head of the intellectual profession, or at least of its progressive sector. I enormously admired his writings and his kaleidoscopic ideas. I knew him to be one of the most controversial figures in British politics, and, in the view of the Establishment statesmen I despised—to quote Lady Caroline Lamb on Byron—"mad, bad and dangerous to know." I had longed to meet him. The idea that he should actually seek me out, take me to dinner, and give me a whole evening of his time seemed to me almost unbelievable fortune. With such high expectations, the occasion might have proved a sad disappointment. It was nothing of the sort. Dick's talk ranged over the whole spectrum of politics, national and international, philosophy, journalism and religion—we explored the encyclopaedia of his all-embracing mind. But it was no monologue. Dick, then as always, enjoyed conversation. He was an avid listener as well as a scintillating talker. With the possible exception of Lord Beaverbrook, he was better than anyone I have met at drawing out a young man, getting him to show, as it were, his intellectual colours. And then, too, he treated everyone as his equal. If, by engaging in conversational battle on such terms, Dick's interlocutor emerged bruised and paralysed, that was too bad; all was fair in the war of ideas, and allies were treated as ruthlessly as opponents. So we talked and laughed and shouted, and I think Dick was as happy as I certainly was. Looking back on it, I wonder what the French diners around us, concentrating professionally on their food, thought of us. Who was the big, distinguished, loud-voiced English man of affairs? And what were he and his young, red-haired compatriot talking about? *Ah, ces drôles d'Anglais!*

Thus the *New Statesman* brought Dick and myself together. His connection with the paper was, I believe, the most important thing in his life, outside his own family. It brought him great pleasure and terrible grief. He came to it in the late 1930s, throwing away his career as an Oxford philosophy don to engage in journalism and politics, on the advice of his mentor, the Warden of New College, H. A. L. Fisher. Fisher warned Dick that he himself had entered politics too late in life, and he urged Dick to get in quick, while he was young enough to learn the rules of success. And, in those days, the *NS* was the royal road to the Parliamentary Left, at any rate for a middle-class intellectual.

But there were drawbacks. Kingsley Martin, so eccentrically generous in private life, was extraordinarily mean to his staff and contributors, long after his genius had turned the paper into a commercial success. He paid his new and distinguished recruit precisely £250 a year (V. S. Pritchett, then, as now, perhaps the best literary critic in the language, got £200 a year for writing the lead book-review each week). Dick remained on the staff, with some war-time interruptions, until 1955, and his increments in salary were rare and meagre; he used to say that Kingsley was determined to starve him to death.

YET DICK'S CONTRIBUTION to the quality and influence of the *NS* was enormous; second only to Kingsley's own. A search through the "marked" bound volumes of the paper during

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this period reveals that a very high proportion of the finest leaders and other unsigned articles was written by Crossman, though Kingsley often maddeningly inserted qualifying phrases in his most emphatic perorations. He also wrote a large number of the sharpest and best-informed paragraphs in Kingsley's "London Diary." He did practically every type of writing for the paper. He travelled widely, often at his own expense, especially in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. The reports he sent back were always illuminating and exciting, though sometimes wrong-headed and quickly belied by events. This was no great disadvantage. The purpose of weekly journalism is to encapsulate seven days, and stir up the minds of the readers; not to achieve a reputation for prescience in twenty years' time. On Germany, Crossman was the acknowledged master, his articles anxiously studied by the Foreign Office mandarins and Chancellor Adenauer's entourage. He was always the star at Königswinter; the Germans feared and adored him, listening to his speeches with a rapt mixture of anger and admiration. Dick was usually, though not invariably, right about the Middle East; and in Israel he was a national figure and a hero. As with Kingsley, his arrival at almost any capital in the world was a notable event, and his reports were eagerly awaited, often with well-grounded apprehension.

In addition, Crossman was the best profile-writer on the staff, as readers can judge by looking at his volume of collected pieces, *The Charm of Politics* (1958). His portrait of Adenauer, "The Alabaster Chancellor", is a masterpiece of the genre. Once Dick came a cropper while profile-writing. Engaged on R. A. Butler, he discovered that his subject was a cousin of Janet Adam Smith, then our Literary Editor. So Dick marched upstairs to the literary floor and said: "Janet, my girl, you're Rab's cousin. Let's have the lowdown on him." (Or words to that effect.) Now Janet is very much a lady, and a great stickler for the proprieties. She was horrified by the mere suggestion that she should disclose family secrets, if indeed there were any, for publication. She listened to Crossman's request in icy silence, and then gave him a roasting. Dick crept back down the stairs like a chastised schoolboy.

However, though Crossman was first class in all the writing departments of the paper, I think Kingsley was right in saying that he excelled as a reviewer of serious books. Kingsley, in fact, told me more than once that he was the best book-reviewer he had ever known. Dick studied the book carefully, took copious notes, presented the author's views fairly and in some detail, and then used them as a launching-pad for a rocket ascent into the stratosphere of his own ideas. It was high-grade journalism at its most stimulating. Moreover, Crossman's range was pretty wide. He could write about novels and even poetry, as well as history, politics and philosophy. Indeed, he was interested in almost everything. Once, when ill, he spent a great deal of time, fascinated, watching all-in wrestling on the telly, and then propounded (in ENCOUNTER, as it happened) some peculiar and highly original conclusions on the subject. But obviously he was at his best when reviewing some new book of political or philosophical ideas; these pieces, I believe, will be read for a long time to come.

WHERE CROSSMAN WAS AT HIS WORST was as a strictly editorial journalist. He never learnt how to sub copy properly. His own articles had to be supervised and monitored. He was not only unpredictable but sometimes wildly irresponsible. He did not accept that a paper has to have a certain consistency in editorial policy. He often triumphantly carried the argument at editorial conferences, wrote the leader according to his views, and saw it set in proof; then Kingsley Martin would alter it at dead of night as the paper was going to press.

Kingsley was afraid of Crossman, and could not stand up to him in debate; but he always saw to it that his own views actually appeared in the paper. That was one reason why he would not allow him to put the *NS* to press. Nor, despite Crossman's seniority, would Kingsley allow him to edit the paper when he himself was abroad. Instead, to Dick's fury, reliable old Leonard Woolf was brought in to preside; and, in the meantime, John Freeman was groomed for the succession.

Matters came to a head in 1955, when Dick was offered a princely salary to write in the *Daily Mirror*. He presented Kingsley Martin with an ultimatum: he would reject the offer on condition he was given the reversion of the editorship; otherwise he would leave for good. Kingsley havered and quavered, but finally turned Crossman down. As John Freeman (I think it was) once remarked: "Kingsley loses all the battles, but he always wins the wars." Crossman foolishly supposed he was indispensable; but of course no one ever is, least of all in journalism. Like Lord Randolph Churchill, he "forgot Goschen"—in this case Goschen being myself. I was quickly brought over from Paris to write the foreign leaders.

CROSSMAN naturally resented it when Kingsley Martin was eventually succeeded, in 1960, by John Freeman. But Freeman was the right, indeed the inevitable, choice. Though he

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lacked Crossman's brilliance as a writer, he had many qualities, essential in an editor, which Crossman simply did not possess: cool and reflective judgment in a crisis, the ability to spot and encourage talent, great attention to detail, a willingness to master the nuts and bolts of the paper, and to see that they worked smoothly by constant supervision; and, above all, the gift of handling his staff with firmness but also with courtesy and consideration. He guided the paper through a very difficult period after the end of the Martin era.

Nevertheless, I always felt that Dick Crossman had been unfairly cheated of the editorship, the thing he wanted most in the world. I once asked him: "If you had the choice, which would you rather be: Prime Minister or Editor of the *NS*?" He said: "Both, of course. But if I had to choose, it would be the *NS*." Unfortunately, I had not worked in the *NS* office when Crossman had been on the staff. Though I was aware of his faults of character, I simply did not know about the inner history of his relations with Kingsley Martin, and Dick's sheer lack of vital editorial experience. I wrongly supposed that Kingsley had passed him by from motives of jealousy and personal dislike, and I thus did a monstrous injustice to one of the best editors of our time.

When, in 1969, I decided to give up the editorship to embark on full-time writing, Lord Campbell and I, deputed by the full board to find a successor, decided after a good deal of heart-searching that none of the young men available was yet ready for the job, which of course is always more difficult when the Labour Party is in office. So we jointly agreed to recommend that the editorship be offered to Dick Crossman, thus securing, as we thought, the best man, and also performing a belated act of justice. The board endorsed our choice, and Crossman accepted with alacrity and joy, on the understanding that I would carry on until the next election. Then he would take over, irrespective of the result. Two conditions were imposed: he would give up his parliamentary seat, as soon as this could be decently done; and he would resign if any question of his health arose (he had a long history of illness, and indeed thought of himself as living on borrowed time). He also volunteered a third. He said to Lord Campbell and myself: "Look. You chaps are taking a great risk in appointing someone like myself. If, at the end of a year or so, you think it isn't working, then I'll go quietly."

Curiously enough, shortly after Dick had been sacked, Bill Hewitt (C. H. Rolph), Kingsley Martin's official biographer, discovered in his papers an undated memo, probably written by Kingsley in the 1950s, giving in detail his reasons why Dick should never be appointed editor of the *NS*. It would not be proper to publish this document now, or perhaps ever. It makes painful reading. I hasten to say that it casts no reflection on Dick Crossman's moral character: he was, to the best of my knowledge, an honest, upright, kind and (for an atheist) God-fearing man. But the document makes it clear that, on past experience, Dick simply would not do for the job. Had the board seen it in 1969, I am sure he would not have been appointed.

WHEN CROSSMAN TOOK OVER the *NS* in 1970, circulation, which had been declining, soared in an impressive manner; then stagnated; and finally began to fall at alarming speed. We were not so much worried by the drop in circulation as by the fact that it was clearly attributable to the over-close association of the paper with the political views of those who had composed the 1964–70 Wilson government. We were still more worried by Dick's evident inability to handle his staff and contributors with tact and respect. In September 1971, out of the blue, he asked the board how long they wished him to continue as Editor. It was agreed and minuted that neither he nor the board would have any obligation to each other after the end of 1972. Early in 1972 he became seriously ill, and we assumed he would resign, as indeed he had undertaken to do. Happily, he made an astonishing recovery; unhappily, he announced his intention to return to his chair immediately. We feared that if he did so there might be a mass walk-out by the staff. So we thought it fair to everyone to warn Dick that, in accordance with our agreement, his appointment would lapse at the end of the year. This meant announcing his departure in June. Alternatively, he could resign immediately on health grounds. Dick's reaction, when reminded of our agreement, was characteristic: "I didn't know that meant you could get rid of me. I thought it meant I could get rid of you." As he refused to accept any compromise, we had no alternative but to dismiss him.

Perhaps, in our anxiety to do the right thing by the paper, while trying to spare Dick's feelings as far as it was possible, we made mistakes. We certainly made a mistake in allowing Dick to continue as editor until a successor was appointed, thus enabling him to demonstrate he had lost nothing of his skill as a "black propagandist." But I am quite certain we were right to fire him; and the paper is now, I am glad to say, once more in a flourishing condition, no mean achievement in these desperate Fleet Street days.

Thus Dick Crossman's connection with the *NS* ended in bitter tragedy and lost friendships. It was as though some blind but malevolent

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sprite had cast an evil spell over his relations with the institution he loved most in the world (as I do myself). But in future years, when the details and the anguish have been forgotten, what will be remembered is that R. H. S. Crossman was the best writer the *New Statesman* has ever had, or is ever likely to have. His writings are there in print, imperishable for all time, for coming generations to read—and marvel at.

The Politician

By Maurice Edelman

NO WORKERS marched to the memorial service for him in Coventry Cathedral. The Deputy Lord Lieutenant represented the Queen in a *fauteuil*; behind him Roy Jenkins represented the Cabinet; and there were old friends from the counties, and local councillors, and academics, and veteran members of the Coventry Labour Party, and a few Zionists making a pilgrimage of gratitude and remembrance. In the large congregation there were many who loved Dick Crossman with a rare devotion. But where were the motor workers and the engineers and the machine-tool men? Where were the T & GW and where was the AUEW?

If they were there, they were lost among the well-dressed middle-class mourners who had come to pay tribute to the statesman, the teacher, the author, and the person.

After the service, I met in the icy wind that blew across the Cathedral ruins Billy Stokes, the secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union in 1945 when Dick and I first came to Coventry. He and Jack Jones of the Transport & General Workers visited us then at our hotel with a simple message. "You mind your own business, and we'll mind ours." It was a declaration of demarcation, but not of war. Stokes retired twelve years ago; Jones was to become General-Secretary of his union. But Stokes, the *revenant*, recalled for me the hour when Crossman, unknowingly, turned his back on the possibility that he might become a Labour leader rather than a Prime Minister's lieutenant.

Not that Dick at the time minded removing himself from a primary concern with trade union affairs. He didn't like factories, nor did he share the romantic view of the working class taken by the Left-wing intellectuals in the 1930s. Because he had become involved in German affairs before the War, he had failed to take part, either emotionally or ideologically, in the great Left-wing wave of sympathy with the Soviet Union which accompanied the anti-fascist revulsion of the period. In the Labour Party after the War, there were atavistic memories of 1917 when the Russian Revolution seemed a great liberating force and Ernie Bevin and his dockers stopped the despatch of arms to the interventionist armies. R. H. S. Crossman, the son of an affluent lawyer, didn't share these memories. He came to socialism a virgin. The conventicles of the I.L.P., in which to sustain Russia against its capitalist enemies seemed the direct means of hastening the Socialist Commonwealth, were foreign to him. Though he was to become a lecturer to the Workers' Educational Association and met the working class on its benches, it was a different experience from that of the workers of Coventry, the Welsh from the valleys, the Northumbrians from the dales, the Irish from their hungry cities, the refugees from the Depression.

CROSSMAN was able to edit and collate the essays of *The God that Failed* (1950) because, unlike many of his university colleagues, he had never entered the *enceinte* of the Communist temple or even its Left-wing suburbs. In 1945 when I first met him, he might easily have become a Labour revisionist in the manner of Anthony Crosland, whose political experience was not unlike his own. The Right-wing of the Party was ready to welcome him. Though Attlee for reasons of personality didn't like and certainly mistrusted Crossman, Bevin recognised his talents and was prepared to use them. The puritan Attlee disapproved of the circumstances of Dick's marriage to Zita; he felt, in addition, that his rebelliousness towards his father might be transferred to a political plane. In this he was right. Crossman's rejection of authority and received ideas had the ambivalence that often parallels a father-rejection; he spent a lot of his political life rebelling against paternalism while seeking a political father-surrogate. He wanted a leader to be Number Two to. . . .

But not Clement Attlee—he was too close to his own father. Bevin, when he appointed Crossman to the Palestine Commission, was already too old, too remote, too intellectually muddled. Besides, it was to take many years before Dick recognised the fact, obvious to the Left-wing intelligentsia who looked to Marxism for inspiration, that the trade unionists of the Tea Room and the constituencies were the heart-and-core of the Labour Movement.

It was to Crossman's credit that he didn't allow Foreign Office pressures to change his views on Palestine. But I think it likely that if instead of quarrelling with Bevin, Dick had produced an acceptable report, his future career might well have lain at the right-centre of the

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Party instead of with the Bevanite Left. Crossman and Gaitskell in the late 1950s weren't as remote from each other as it appeared. For Dick as a Left-winger had little in common with the Russophiles like, say, Konni Zilliacus. For him, "public ownership" wasn't an overwhelming cause. The geography of the Left where he chose to settle was on a different map from that of the Old Believers. He was an inspiration of the "*Keep Left*" manifesto which was signed, among others, by Woodrow Wyatt. Decolonisation, reduction of arms expenditure, and a certain anti-Americanism were among the themes of "*Keep Left.*" But there was nothing in it that was a fundamental challenge to the "Capitalist System". "*Keep Left*" was a label, scarcely a philosophy.

IT WAS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS that Crossman made his Parliamentary reputation. When, during the Palestine debates of 1947, his name went up on the annunciator, the Chamber would rapidly fill. Members left their drinks half-finished; the Tea Room would disgorge its reflective pipe-puffers; and at the Bar of the House, there'd soon be two rows of attentive listeners following Dick through a series of compulsive syllogisms which only Aneurin Bevan could equal.

For all his intellectual thrust, Dick had a need for both prompt communication and reassurance. And so while he would stand below the gangway wagging his finger at his own Front Bench, he would repeatedly turn to his supporters below the gangway, seeking their cheers and approval which he won in abundance at each stage of his argument.

In politics there's only one measurable prize, and that is promotion. Dick was more chagrined than he ever showed publicly that Prime Minister Attlee should have spurned his abilities and denied him office. He turned from the frustration of a patronage denied, to the Party ladder where he could climb by his own efforts. I was present when Bevin accused Crossman at the Party Conference of stabbing him in the back during his absence in Washington seeking aid for Britain. The Right-wing trade unionists bayed; they wanted Crossman's blood. They didn't get it, for with his speech Bevin made Crossman a national figure, a hero of the activist Left in the constituencies. Dick became a man of the Left because he had measured himself against a man of the Right.

HE WAS AN IDEOLOGUE, absorbed in a dialectical exercise whether he was walking with John Strachey in the Library Corridor, and drinking with Nye Bevan and his coterie in the Smoking Room, or standing surrounded by an argumentative group in a Working Men's Club in Coventry. But what set him apart from the Left-wing theorists was his concern with power. I recall him at one Election meeting—it must have been in 1959—when he first appeared to me as a mass orator, quite unlike the persuasive debater he had always been. He used the word "*power*" like an incantation. Labour, he argued, needed "*power.*" As he bent his knees and clenched his fists, the word exploded from his mouth with an orgasmic quality. His working-class audience responded with a cool interest. It hadn't made contact with Crossman's recognition that one administrator in Government was worth a thousand mediocre speeches.

He won a place on the Labour Party Executive in the firm knowledge that only the machine could provide power within the Party. He was diligent, a regular attender at the National Executive; and he cultivated both Nye Bevan and Hugh Gaitskell. Nor did commitment to "Bevanism" prevent him from maintaining a close association with the "Gaitskellites." While he had entrenched himself in a loose identification with the Party Left, and attacked the Revisionism of Tony Crosland, he still retained a certain nostalgia for his own reformist theories. I remember the uproar when in his *Sunday Pictorial* column he criticised what he claimed to be the poor quality of trade-union representation in the House of Commons. It was what later came to be called an élitist attitude more fitting for the Hampstead Set than the robust Left. Dick backed away quickly from what might have been a fatal *gaffe*. He knew that even the Party machine couldn't stand against the quiet men of the Tea Room and the Trade Unions.

IN THE COVENTRY CONSTITUENCY, Crossman, like most other Labour M.P.s—and for that matter Tory M.P.s—willingly accepted the role of welfare officer, ushered in with the Attlee Government of 1945. He was attentive and conscientious in dealing with the problems of individuals. He applied himself, above all, to municipal matters, in which he had himself served an apprenticeship as a Labour Councillor at Oxford. He was never too grand to attend to the detailed affairs of the constituency, although early on he decided not to be a guest at municipal functions where he wasn't required to speak. In Coventry, as at Westminster, he generated affection. Despising charm, he charmed nevertheless most of those he met. It was only the bullies he bullied (or within his intimate circle, those he liked very much).

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As a minister in Harold Wilson's first Government, Crossman arrived with a bounce of enthusiasm. Housing, social services, pensions, House of Commons reform—he attacked each problem with a highly personal gusto. Whatever the subject, he made M.P.s think. These weren't broad issues like those of foreign affairs where he was most at home, but matters of administration, of measurement, of statistics. Oratory had little place in his presentation of these matters; the realities of money and of resources meant much more.

And so it was about this time that Crossman, like many an ideologue before him, had to turn from his place of authority on many of those he had taught. In Government, he became impatient of his pupils, and sometimes the people who came to lobby Crossman the Ideologue found they were lobbying a Minister. The amorphous Left in the constituencies discovered that the idea of "the Left" in Government took many forms which they didn't like at all.

Dick's intellectual impatience spilled over into his handling of the House when he was Leader. He had difficulty in accommodating himself to the traditional placatory phrases after Questions on Thursday when he had to announce the business of the House and at the same time to ward off the critics who used the occasion to make political points. He was a procedural reformer; yet all that survives of his endeavours are one or two Select Committees. Even the experiment in morning sessions failed.

Yet to record a catalogue of failure and frustration is only to tell a fraction of Richard Crossman's political achievement. In the Party, he had a catalytic effect. As a backbencher, he made the most supine willing, on occasion, to challenge *idées reçues*, even when reinforced by the power of the Whips. He had a posture of irreverence that excited the young men of his generation to stand and challenge authority. In a Soviet-oriented Left, he was a bridge with the Atlanticists and with an America that he both criticised and admired. Even when he rejected authority, he respected power.

It was a personal tragedy for Crossman that he never had the opportunity in Government of dealing with the matters of which he had most knowledge—foreign affairs. He was an expert in particular on Anglo-German relations, spoke German fluently, and for a time believed in a United Europe (though in later years he became an ardent anti-Marketeer). I have no doubt that Harold Wilson, like Attlee, denied him office in foreign relations because of his alleged unpredictability. In fact, Crossman was a specialist in a Germanic kind of *Realpolitik*. Had he become Foreign Secretary, he might have been a Bismarck (possibly even a Kissinger); or then again, he might have become a little Englander. It was a possibility which was never put to the hazard. The stakes for Harold Wilson seemed too high; he chose instead George Brown.

Crossman was denied the field where his genius could have flowered. But he applied himself with the intensity of a scholar, a student, and a man of sensibility to the domestic Ministries where he was summoned.

There was nothing in his external behaviour to reveal his capacity to feel—but he had a quality of compassion which he treated like a guilty secret. It sometimes emerged in public as when he dragged into the open the mistreatment of the mentally sick in a Welsh hospital. In Coventry, there are thousands whom he helped without self-advertisement but with dedication.

Will Richard Crossman rank in the folk-memory of British Socialism with, say, Arthur Henderson or George Lansbury or Bevin or Bevan or Arthur Greenwood or even Herbert Morrison whom he regarded with a casual contempt? His abilities were so varied and his talents so outstanding that no historian of the Labour Movement will ever be able to deny him his place as a leading Socialist thinker of our times. He was never called on to make personally the cardinal decisions that affect a nation's existence or even its major policies. (The renunciation of the Palestine Mandate is the nearest that I can recall.)

Yet through the whole of the post-War period till his death, Crossman gave colour and animation to the political scene as no one else could and did. He wasn't cast in the avuncular mould of Arthur Henderson. He didn't represent the Christian Socialism of George Lansbury. He didn't seek to be leader like Greenwood or Morrison. He couldn't rouse the working classes like Bevin or Bevan.

Richard Howard Stafford Crossman was *sui generis*, a man who like a Tolstoyan went to the people, taught, fought, was rejected and returned, spending his last months in service to the humblest of his Coventry constituents. Unlike the familiar Labour leaders, Dick Crossman wasn't born into the Movement; he chose it and strengthened it. It will be another reason, I believe, why in time to come his name will be added to its roll-call of legatees who increased the inheritance.

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The Price of the New Inflation

By John Vaizey

APART FROM THE PERSONAL DISASTERS of illness, bereavement, disgrace and depression, the world affects us catastrophically, and we may regard the brief periods of public content as extraordinary intermissions afforded us by a capricious providence—perhaps designed to drive us to greater despair by giving us an illusion of what might be if the world were other than it is. Britain in the past thirty years has, with marginal exceptions, avoided the worst that malevolent fate might bring. Millions are not suffering from war as two recent generations experienced it; millions are not in slave camps, as they are in the USSR; millions are not starving, as they are in Asia; and millions have not been subjected to the experience of unemployment that was endemic here between the two World Wars. The worst we have suffered is a pollution of our environment, cultural and physical, and a chronic mild inflation which has now become strong. Perhaps it is true that pollution and inflation are two evils that will join the other four, will perhaps indeed bring them back. The years since the end of the War may become one of those intermissions whose recollected pleasantness will seem to us as illusory in its period charm as Edwardian England, with all its brilliant young men and women flirting with great ideas on velvety lawns to background music by Elgar, seemed to those who survived the trenches.

Perhaps. What seems to one man to be visual and cultural pollution of the most abhorrent kind seems to another—no, does not seem, but is—a good house, in pleasant surroundings, where his family may grow up in conditions of comfort which, modest though it may be, both in style and absolutely, is something to be thankful for compared with what past generations have endured. Recycle the newspapers, bicycle to work, make the dishwasher last thirty years instead of fifteen, wear thicker underwear and turn the thermostat down, it is still more than endurable. And it is tiresome that a 2d. Walls ice-cream now costs 10p., and will shortly cost £10, and perhaps £10m. in 1976. But is it more than tiresome, so far? Is it inevitable that the inflation will gallop on, and (separate question) in so doing bring the depression, the unemployment, the poverty, the prison camps and perhaps, ultimately, the wars, whose absence would have been to earlier generations (including those of us now in our forties) a subject for saying the General Thanksgiving?

IT IS NOT KNOWN what has caused the recent inflation. It has affected all countries, even in the Eastern bloc, regardless of their forms and structures of governments. It has survived demand deflation, income and price controls, exhortations by politicians of the Right and of the Left. The Pope has not yet anathematised it though his success in a related field—population decontrol—has not been exactly dramatic. It has certainly followed a period of unprecedented change, which many would call an improvement, in living standards. Earlier inflations have followed different changes—like military defeat, or world discoveries of new supplies of precious metals. That this inflation is a cause of social dissolution (or a part of it) depends upon the values assigned to the term dissolution, and the general view of the world (as well as the particular economic and political theories) held by the commentator.

It may well be that the stresses of inflation are so great that measures will have to be taken to control it which, in the guise of protecting the liberal social-democratic state, will mortally wound it. That such a series of measures will have to be deliberately designed to bring about (as against accidentally causing) a long-run change of expectations of a home with a bath, washing machine and central heating, a car, a school with classes of 30 pupils, and an adequately staffed hospital, with a reasonably adequate radio and television service—which is all that the expectations of affluence, so puritanically condemned, actually mean for most of us—seems unlikely. That such measures will have to include control of money incomes, and already do so include them, is certain. It is likely that, in consequence, political conflict will increasingly take the form that it did in Britain from 1969 to the 1974 general election.

That these conflicts may include threats to political stability is probable. Like Dr Mishan, I am greatly disturbed at the cynical way in which the civil service and its ministerial tools have been willing to risk this political stability by allowing policies to emerge that seem to devalue the appeal to a sense of civic pride, of patriotism,

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which has historically played so important a part in maintaining the British political structure. Yet it may perhaps be that Appeals to Patriotism have often had a disgraceful side to them, by allowing (for example) the 1914 War to break out and be continued. That conflict was perhaps the greatest evil our present civilisation has ever seen, leading directly to Lenin and indirectly to Hitler; and the blame must rest squarely not only upon the Kaiser, but on the Foreign Office and Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, who appealed to loyalty—to treaties, to duty, and to patriotism. To fight inflation in the name of such patriotism might just lead to a repatriation of immigrants (and the Vaizeys have only been here for 4 centuries; about the Mishans one is less sure, perhaps they are an old Saxon family). It might result in a destruction of a new international order in Western Europe which, despite the absurdity of the Brussels bureaucracy, does have high ideals. It could result in a sacrifice of the cultural achievements which this generation has seen, in the cause of a "managerialism" that would be as detestable as the élitism that drove Asquith to help subvert the European civilisation of his day.

In that process the fates would undoubtedly deal us blows as hard as they dealt the generation that was then destroyed. But since the fates are blind, as blind as we are ourselves, the blows may be inevitably on their way, as surely as death, bereavement, sickness and defeat will meet us all, every one.

New Inflation, Old Obsession

By Nigel Lawson

DR MISHAN has, for many years now, suffered from (to use his own terminology) an obsession amounting to monomania. This takes the form of a profound conviction (*a*) that everyone else (government, politicians, press—you name us, we're all in it, either as the brainwashers or the brainwashed) is "obsessed" with the "monomaniac pursuit of economic growth", and (*b*) that this is the root cause of all our present ills.

When he first attracted well-merited attention, with the publication of his book *The Costs of Economic Growth* in 1967, the costs which concerned him were the deterioration in the quality of life, in the environment in its widest sense. Now that the focus of public concern has shifted somewhat from the environment to inflation, it is this new (and very real) evil which Dr Mishan seeks to attribute to the same original sin.

Yet not quite the same. For while it was the *attainment* of economic growth which, in the original book, was alleged to bring environmental loss in its wake, it is now rather more the *non-attainment* of growth, in the sense of unrealised (and, according to Mishan, unrealisable) expectations, that is alleged to produce the new inflation. This last is, of course, a gross oversimplification of Dr Mishan's latest thesis: none the less, the shift is an important one.

Moreover there is another, and still more important, shift. Whereas the growth cult was held to be the *direct* cause of environmental deterioration, in the case of the new inflation the causal link is distinctly *indirect*. The proximate cause of inflation is identified as the exercise of trade union power; and the growth cult is in fact presented as a second-order affair—as the explanation of why the trade unions behave in the way they do.

The consequence of this two-stage theory is not merely that it is incumbent upon Dr Mishan, if he is to sustain his thesis, to demonstrate, independently, the validity of each of the two links in the causal chain. It also raises the very real practical operational question of whether the second link (the explanation of trade union behaviour in terms of the growth cult), the one in which Mishan is chiefly interested, matters, even if it is true. Obviously, if the exercise of trade union power is *not* the proximate cause of inflation, it cannot matter. But even if (as I believe to be the case) this first and crucial link is established, how much does the second link really matter? After all, when a group in society behaves in a dangerously anti-social way, our normal response is not to psychoanalyse it but to stop it. When the offenders are large corporations, for example, we pass anti-monopoly and other appropriate forms of legislation: we do not worry overmuch about the sociology of business behaviour, or attempt to change the entire corporate *Weltanschauung*. Indeed, this approach is characteristic of applied economics in general, and for a number of very good reasons —one of which, as Mishan himself points out, is that, given the appropriate legal framework, motivations that might otherwise produce socially undesirable results may be channelled to the public good.

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AS FOR THE TWO CAUSAL LINKS themselves, it may be helpful to examine these separately (a logical approach unfortunately not adopted by Mishan). The explanation of inflation in terms of trade union behaviour, although perhaps an economic heresy—professional economists have a vested interest in analyses in terms of the variables they were brought up to handle, particularly those which lend themselves to quantification—is, of course, something of a political commonplace. None the less, Mishan's admirable treatment of this relationship is worth setting out in his own words, if only as a guarantee against inadvertent misrepresentation.

"Why" Mishan asks,

> "may it no longer be possible to apply fiscal and monetary measures so as eventually to stabilise prices or, at least, reduce significantly the rate of inflation experienced over the last two or three years?
>
> "...the answer may be found in the growing power of organised labour over the last thirty years, and its awareness of that power. The ease with which the trade unions (or, for that matter, any determined group of workmen) are able to exert pressure on employers and on the public has, of course, been facilitated by the larger size of industrial plant [and by nationalisation]. . . . But even without any growth in the size of industrial plant or in the extent of nationalisation . . . any disruption of the flow of products or services from the industry as a whole, whether by strike action, 'working to rule', or other methods, will be suffered by the general public who, it is assumed, will always favour a speedy settlement through existing arbitration machinery or, in the last resort (which last resort is never far off today), through government intervention."

In short,

> "Each union or organised group . . . realises that the concessions it can wring from society depend ultimately on the extent of the potential disruption it can inflict on the community"

and acts accordingly.

But surely, when every group behaves in this way, the whole process is self-defeating? Yes, says Mishan:

> "For the economy as a whole, the exercise is not only futile but wasteful of energy. Yet, though true for 'the economy as a whole', it is not true for each particular segment of it. If the widget-makers' union receives a pay increase in excess of the average, then it does indeed improve its position in real terms and in the general pay-structure, notwithstanding the consequent rise in widget prices. The widget-makers' union knows this. So does every other union."

But why is it "no longer possible to apply fiscal and monetary measures" to the solution of this problem?

> "The orthodox argument is that a refusal by the authorities to expand the quantity of money any further, or their determination to reduce the quantity of money, will eventually make it impossible for employers to grant wage increases even if they are otherwise willing to do so. But if, following such a contingency, workers (though aware of the financial inability of the industry to meet their wage claims) remain adamant in 'working to rule', or in refusing to return to work, what then? With the central bank under the control of the government of the day, their persistence in strike action has now to be interpreted as *a form of direct pressure on the government to reverse its monetary decisions*." [My italics]

And why is such pressure so effective? Because, says Mishan,

> "In a liberal democratic society, no political party wants to be associated by the electorate with continued industrial unrest or prolonged inconvenience (especially if an election is in the offing). And since it also does not wish its term of office to be associated with severe and protracted unemployment, the government of the day is tempted to seek concessional formulae rather than lay off workers in the face of exorbitant demands."

Thus, he concludes,

> "we seem to have reached a stage where we have to make a political choice between price stability and maintaining traditional freedoms—to the extent, at least, of leaving intact the existing power of trade unions and shop stewards. Certainly, price-stability, the welfare-state, and free collective bargaining are no longer mutually compatible."

This is indeed the political choice before us; and the obvious conclusion is that, if we are serious about halting the new inflation, there is nothing for it but to curb, or at least deter, by a series of carefully-chosen legislative measures, trade union and shop-steward power. Yet this is not the conclusion reached by Mishan—perhaps (although he nowhere says this explicitly) because he regards any such action as politically impossible. Certainly, such modest attempts as have already been made—both by the previous Labour Government in 1969 and by the Conservative Government of 1970–74—demonstrate that it will be acutely difficult. But it cannot simply be dismissed as impossible; even though, such is the present power of the unions, we may well need a National Government, in the sense of a genuine coalition drawn from both major parties, to do the job.

WHAT, THEN, OF THE SECOND LINK in Mishan's causal chain: the thesis that the pattern of trade-union behaviour, the use to which trade-union power is put, is a consequence of the obsession of successive British governments with the pursuit of economic growth? There is no need to do more than re-examine Mishan's own lucid account of the crucial first link to recognise that the growth thesis is not merely fanciful but—more important—otiose.

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At no stage in his argument—which I have quoted at length above—does anything depend on the existence, real or alleged, of a growth cult. Indeed, all that is required, as his useful example of the widget-makers makes clear, is the assumption that individual trade unions behave in a rational manner. That is to say, free collective bargaining is analogous to advertising in an industry with a static market. Looking at the industry as a whole, advertising expenditure on any scale is obviously irrational, since the overall market is, *ex hypothesi*, static. However, the decisions are made, not by the industry as a whole, but by each firm. And for an individual firm, advertising expenditure is clearly rational, since the company might thereby increase its own share of the market. Indeed, for every individual firm, advertising can become an essential form of purely protective behaviour, designed simply to prevent an existing market share from being eroded.

Thus, by the same token, given that trade unions are (*a*) autonomous and (*b*) seek to promote and protect the material living standards of their members (facts, needless to say, which were established more than a hundred years before any government had even heard of economic growth, let alone imagined that it could influence it), it follows that, within the existing legal and political framework, the explanation of why trade unions behave as they do, and use their power as they do, is simply that it is rational for them to do so—growth cult or no growth cult.

What of the necessary framework? The legal framework, which is essentially that of 1906, clearly antedates by over half a century the emergence of any cult of economic growth. The present political framework is of rather more recent origin. The key here lies, as Mishan points out in his discussion of the inefficiency of orthodox remedies, in the *de facto* syndicalisation of the monetary printing press. This has occurred as a direct result of the absolute commitment of all governments to the preservation of full employment; and this in turn can be traced to two key 20th-century developments: (*a*) Keynes, and the acceptance of the Keynesian doctrine that governments possess the power to maintain full employment; and (*b*) universal suffrage, which ensures that governments which desire to be re-elected dare not decline to use this power.

It is, incidentally, curious that Mishan, who so cogently deplores almost every modern development, from the motor car to the transistor radio, from the decline of patriotism to the loss of religious faith, has nothing whatever to say about the constraint of universal suffrage, which is absolutely central to the issue under discussion. Indeed, in his discussion of such matters as coloured immigration, decimalisation, and the Common Market, his complaint seems to be that the mass electorate is not heeded enough. Perhaps, like many of us, he is inclined to exalt the views of the People when he happens to share them, and to maintain a tactful silence when he does not.

Whether this is so or not, it is evident that neither Keynes nor universal suffrage can be blamed on the latter-day growth cult. (The connection, rather, is the other way about.) Thus the Mishan thesis that it is this cult, this obsessive pursuit of economic growth, which is responsible for the inflationary pattern of trade union behaviour, is seen to be unsustainable.

AT TIMES, IN FACT, he almost seems to admit as much. Thus, in one particularly revealing passage, he writes:

> "I am suggesting that the monetary inflation cannot properly be understood without recognising its connection with the universal inflation of expectations that has characterised the history of the post-War world. Seen in that light it appears as a product, possibly an inevitable product, of the evolution of the capitalist ethic."

Approval (as socially beneficent) of the pursuit (by individuals and, by extension, by groups) of material self-interest—which is roughly what is meant here by "the capitalist ethic"—is, understandably, repugnant to the ascetic, traditionalist puritan that Dr Mishan openly reveals himself to be. It is, of course, open to the defenders of the capitalist ethic to retort that they have always held that the pursuit of self-interest must be regulated by an appropriate framework of law; and that, when socially harmful consequences result, this may well indicate a far from inevitable defect in the legal framework. But in the context quoted above, the important point is that if inflation really is "an inevitable product of the capitalist ethic", then the growth cult necessarily ceases to have any special significance. It is simply—at most—one of many stages in the inexorable evolutionary process.

Indeed, it is not going too far to suggest that, in the guise of attacking the Cult of Economic Growth that has flourished—albeit rather fitfully—in Britain over the past decade or so, Mishan is really seeking to condemn something far more fundamental, of which the growth cult is an unimportant symptom that happens to provide a fashionable Aunt Sally. (It is notable, incidentally, that Mishan nowhere suggests that we can cure inflation by casting away our graven images and abandoning the false god of growth.)

In so far as it is anything more than a symptom, it is presented as an explanation of the increasing degree of militancy adopted by trade unions in

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recent years in the self-interested use of their industrial power. Thus, according to Mishan, the propaganda of the Growth-men led to a sharp inflation of expectations about future living standards, and trade unions jacked up their pay claims accordingly. Thereupon the failure to attain the promised rise in living standards, the non-fulfilment of Government-created (and, argues Mishan, wholly unrealistic) expectations, made the unions bloody-minded and determined to be still more militant.

Granted that militancy and inflation feed on themselves and each other, the question of the exogenous determinants of trade union militancy is, admittedly, not without some topical interest. The present Labour Government, for example, holds that militancy is directly fuelled by trade union resentment at inequalities of incomes and wealth, and that the more egalitarian society becomes the less aggressive will trade union behaviour be. This is the sociology of the so-called Social Contract, on which the present Government is (at least ostensibly) wholly relying to deal with the problem of inflation. There is, it is true, some confusion over whether such a social contract is a simple deal between Government and trade-union leaders, which could have been about anything, or whether it is based on a profound theory of trade union behaviour and motivation. But there is no doubt that this latter sense is seen by most of its proponents as crucial.

I KNOW OF NOTHING THAT any self-respecting social scientist would regard as valid empirical evidence to support either of these hypotheses. The Mishan hypothesis is unconvincing if only because it is difficult to believe that most of the unions involved have even been aware of the Growth Cult which so distresses him—and, more generally, because in so far as they were made fleetingly aware of it, when NEDC "growth targets" were publicised in the press or "National Plans" launched on television, the notion that Government pronouncements (whether on this or indeed any other matter) can have so profound an effect on the pattern of human behaviour seems inherently absurd.

Nor do I find the egalitarian hypothesis any more convincing—if anything, rather less. Indeed, it is notable both that the period of increased militancy (and increased inflation) has, in fact, coincided in Britain with a sharp move towards a more equal distribution of incomes and wealth (as conventionally measured); and also that militant trade unions are more often concerned with the enlargement than with the diminution of pay "differentials." Indeed, what both the Mishan and the egalitarian hypotheses illustrate is the political temptation to attribute trade union militancy, and hence inflation, to whatever aspect of society the speaker happens to find most offensive—thus providing a convenient new reason for excoriating the pre-selected scapegoat.

ALL THE SAME, I will be rash enough to suggest that such further plausibility as both these hypotheses may enjoy derives from the connection between trade union behaviour and economic change. It is, of course, a commonplace that we are living in a period of exceptionally rapid technological change. But I suspect that most of those who ostensibly reject the pursuit of economic growth are in reality objecting to change. This certainly seems to be true of Mishan. In *The Costs of Economic Growth*, for example, his most bitter denunciation is of the proliferation of the private motor car. Yet non-growth will not save us from the motor car: indeed, for many years the British economy provided the world with a remarkably good approximation to a society with zero overall economic growth coupled with a sharp increase in motor traffic.

But rapid technological change, and its consequences in terms of changing patterns of consumer spending, implies sharp changes in patterns of employment and in relative wages. Inevitably, whatever may be happening in absolute terms, some groups will gain and others lose from this in relative terms—and those who lose are apt to feel resentful.

It is this, I suggest, that provides much of the steam behind trade union militancy. It is not resentment at inequality as such that motivates trade union behaviour, but any change for the worse in the existing pattern of inequalities—and, since the concept is a relative one, any change (including, of course, any move towards greater egalitarianism) will be for the worse for some group. This is why, in many countries, there has been such deliberate government emphasis on economic growth—on the principle that a change for the worse in relative terms is likely to cause less resentment, and arouse less hostility and militancy, if it is always accompanied by a change for the better in absolute terms. (This is not to deny Mishan's point about the unwisdom of setting unattainable growth targets; nor, incidentally, the validity of his charge that incomes policies tend to focus attention on relative wage levels, and thus exacerbate any sense of grievance—although I fail to see how this has the slightest bearing on his central Growth/Inflation thesis.)

However, even if this analysis is right (and, although it is certainly unproven, it does seem

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prima facie more probable than Mishan's explanation in terms of "growth mania"), it is not, I believe, operationally important. Obviously it is better to understand the forces at work in society than not to understand them, But, so far as inflation is concerned, our only real interest lies in curbing it. And we are not able, in a free society, to avoid technological change (even if we wished to). We are not able to change human nature and hence public reaction to the consequences of technological change. Above all, we cannot guarantee that, by removing one factor contributing to trade union militancy, there will not be others leading to similar behaviour.

TO SUM UP, THEN: Mishan admirably demonstrates how trade union power is the root cause of "the new inflation", and why such power is to all intents and purposes immune to orthodox economic measures. This power is used because it is rational for any union to use it—and, in a non-deferential society, people will pursue their own self-interest within the law. The precise degree of militancy with which trade union power is used at any period is likely to depend on a number of factors, of which the alleged growth obsession of the British Establishment may conceivably, in recent years, have been one—although this seems unlikely. But in any case, this question is supremely unimportant. For the only workable assumption is that, wherever power exists, sooner or later that power will be used; and, once it has been used successfully, it will not then be forsworn. Hence, if we are serious (and we certainly should be) about the evils of inflation, the only practical conclusion is that the most important task of government today is to introduce acceptable measures that will, directly or indirectly curb, deter and tame the use of trade union power.

This does not imply a crude, all-out, frontal assault on the trade unions. Indeed, governments will need to be almost machiavellian in the care and subtlety with which they pursue this end. But the problem of trade-union power is the most serious constitutional crisis and challenge the modern democratic state has yet had to face. It will not go away of its own accord.

Hamlet

How does Hamlet differ from John Jones?
You smile. Easy, you imply,
remembering his daily pilgrimage
about the parish, from house to shop,
from pub to urinal; the sick reek
of tobacco; the village wind
sour with his talk. Not easy to forget
a man who for seventy
odd years sculptured his presence
in the drizzling workshop of the air
of Llanllyfni, his muscled oilskin
slippery in the neon-lighting
of the streets. You knew him, you
say; the grave's garrulous slate
proves he existed.
But I didn't;
I must take your word for him.
It is Hamlet is real to me:
the pale prince on the perilous platform
of himself, a martyr to
thought; asking the question
of life that we all ask, and giving
us his shrill, indelible answer.

R. S. Thomas

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LETTERS

Passmore's "Rubbish"

PROFESSOR JOHN PASSMORE—April ENCOUNTER, "Removing the Rubbish", pp. 20 and 21—makes some senseless remarks unworthy of him. He identifies Stalin with Professor Skinner of the USA and an eminent international psychologist as "two authoritarians in our own century." It would be just as nonsensical if he drew a parallel between the notorious Nazi *ersatz*-philosopher Rosenberg and Professor Jensen.

Earlier on p. 20 he writes "condemning the view that every pursuit is valuable just in so far as it is a way of making money", a condemnation in which very many will share, but he then goes on to support his condemnatory remarks by a quotation from Marx, the founder of modern dictatorships, who wrote "on the Jewish Question" that "money is the Jealous God of Israel before whom no other god may exist."

The Professor's thinking as expressed in the above instances proves the truth of Wittgenstein's aphorism that language has lost its way, gone astray.

HARRY GREVILLE

Stanningfield,
W. Suffolk

I FIND Mr Greville's observations very puzzling. I should not for a moment wish to suggest that Stalin and Professor Skinner would happily have found themselves co-dictators in the Soviet Union, let alone that Plato would gladly have joined them in a triumvirate.

Authoritarianism takes a great variety of forms; I deliberately chose very different people as my examples of it. That strengthens the case for my view that there is some kind of link between authoritarianism and an attack on sensuousness.

As for Marx, one can make nothing of the appeal he has had except by seeing him as drawing attention to what are quite generally felt to be weaknesses in our society. But at the same time part of his power lay in his appeal to primitive and irrational prejudices. The quotation and its context simultaneously illustrate these two points.

JOHN PASSMORE

Australian National University,
Canberra

Zaehner's "Evil"

I READ THE recent article "The Wickedness of Evil" [ENCOUNTER, April] with interest and some distress. Professor Zaehner, who should know better, has seriously misrepresented the Hindu and Buddhist mystical tradition. This tradition states that not only is the realised *yogin* beyond moral relativity, but that he is beyond desire and hostility. Charles Manson is, of course, hardly the best example of such transcendence.

Both Buddhism and Hinduism consistently affirm that the characteristic of the enlightened man is his selfless love for all beings. This love precisely is the outcome of the knowledge of oneness. ("For seeing Him, the same, the Lord, established everywhere, he cannot of himself to himself do hurt . . ."—*Bhagavad Gita* 13 : 28). Mahāyāna Buddhism asserts that *prajñā* or wisdom without *upāya*, the "skilful means" of active compassion, is a sterile spiritual attainment.

Professor Zaehner's recognition of Charles Manson's "logic," and his acceptance of both this and Manson's "enlightenment" at face value manifest as failure to distinguish between the word on the printed page and the immediate reality of experience and action, whether spiritual, emotional or social. Passages quoted by Professor Zaehner are taken dangerously out of context; but a glance at the context and at the concrete results of Mansonism on the one hand, and yogic discipline on the other, should suffice to illumine the real meaning of these statements. "By their fruits ye shall know them"—the fruits of Mansonisms are known to all. The fruits of authentic enlightenment (not its pop facsimiles) are, unfortunately, less well known or less regarded.

The Japanese business executive whose *satori* was referred to ultimately became a Zen master after many further years of training. Having met him, I can attest to his profoundly compassionate nature and his purity. He and others of genuine mystical experience are for the most part hidden from public view, while the Charles Mansons all too easily draw our fascinated attention.

Just as the scriptural teachings first affirm *both* relative morality and transcendent truth (the paramārthasatya and saṃvṛti-satya of the Mahāyāna) and then proceed to found the former in the latter, so in the personalities of true mystics both love and the detachment of non-dual vision are to be found as complementary aspects of an organic whole.

Perhaps Professor Zaehner is just making a point; but he and others who study the East should remain aware that the misapplications of non-dual teachings are simply that, and that (as Professor Zazhner himself has recognised elsewhere) the apparent similarities between psychosis and mysticism should not lead automatically to the conclusion that they are identical.

PRISCILLA PEDERSEN

Committee of Oriental Studies,
Columbia University,
N.Y.C.

MAY I MAKE the following comments on Priscilla Pedersen's letter:

1. To assert that Hinduism and Buddhism *consistently* affirm anything argues a strange unfamiliarity with those quite distinct religions, or an unwillingness to face unpalatable facts. As to "selfless love": if there is no "self", who or what does the loving?

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2. It is false to say that the passages I quote from the *Upanishads* and the *Gītā* are taken out of context. That they are "dangerous" I thought I had pointed out clearly enough.

3. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Why bring in this Christian tag to explain Indian ideas according to which total indifference to the fruits (*phalāni*) of action (*karma*) is tirelessly recommended?

4. How do you tell "authentic" enlightenment from unauthentic, or "true" mystics from false ones? Nowadays the words "authentic" and "true" when used in these contexts have about as much meaning as "existential", that is, none at all; or, in this case, they presumably mean little more than what Priscilla Pedersen thinks is a good thing.

5. It is scarcely true to say that people "of genuine" (or, if you prefer it, "true, authentic, existential") "mystical experiences are hidden from view" as the relentless stream of books on Zen and Neo-Vedanta from the United States would seem to show. Manson obtained world-wide publicity because his victims were Hollywood celebrities. There was a similar series of murders committed by someone called Mullins, I think, when I was in California in 1973, allegedly caused by a fascination with Oriental mysticism. This was, of course, reported in the *Los Angeles Times* and even got a paragraph in the *Sunday Times* over here. However, the victims were not film stars, so we heard no more about it. It is the "wicked" mystics who usually get no publicity largely because, one supposes, they do not want it.

Or perhaps Priscilla Pedersen thinks I have taken the "higher ecumenism" too far. She may be right, but I hope she can find better arguments than the usual stock-in-trade of the North American Religious Studies establishment.

R. C. ZAEHNER

All Souls,
Oxford

Bauer's "Myth"

I HAVE READ "A Myth of Our Time" by P. T. Bauer [ENCOUNTER, March]. To a non-specialist like myself most of the arguments advanced sound quite plausible. As to the reasons for the continuation of this state of affairs, I wonder whether it is not largely due to a general attitude, or if you like an approach likely to be that of politicians, jurists, economic planners, and educational authorities.

I refer to their marked preference for open loop control. In contrast, members of the medical profession, engineers or research scientists tend to take a closed loop approach. In their respective fields this takes the form of (*1*) testing a new drug on animals, improving it, then testing it in clinical conditions; (*2*) building a Mark I version, testing it on the bench etc., and (*3*) starting with a working hypothesis, devising an experiment, improving the hypothesis.

In other words, in all these cases the corrective action is built in from the start. In the former case it is often only forthcoming through external pressure. Admittedly laws of economy, human behaviour and the like are less well established than those in the other fields mentioned. Nevertheless one could close at least local loops where possible. When someone gets killed because of a professional mistake of a medical practitioner or an engineer, the culprit may well find himself behind prison bars. Politicians, economic planners, educationalists *et al.* apparently get away with mistakes causing misery and maybe even death to many people.

Question: would treating them before the law, like doctors and engineers, help to improve their approach?

K. H. REICH

Geneva,
Switzerland

WHILE P. T. BAUER makes a number of astute points about the economic consequences of foreign aid in developing countries ["Foreign Aid, Forever?" ENCOUNTER, March], his argument seems incomplete without considering the political context of "giving." I doubt that the supporters of large aid programmes are swayed by economic argumentation however persuasive.

Foreign aid is properly an instrument of national policy. When judiciously applied, aid should win for the donor nation support or at least a sympathetic hearing from politically decisive classes in recipient countries. There are the politicians, Western-style intellectuals, economists, and union leaders whom Professor Bauer mentions—and military officers should be included here as well.

Foreign-policy specialists in America and England have failed both to inform the public about the narrower purposes of aid, and to build constituencies that would favour their more limited ends. More often than not, they have found it easier to use the rhetoric of generosity and appeal to the humanitarian impulses of democracy. The danger of this situation is that citizens are not led to think about foreign policy in rational terms, and dissenters can use the arguments of generosity as another means to protest the dominance of "hard-liners".

I. A. GILBERT

Simmons College,
Boston, Mass.

AS DR REICH does not appear to address himself directly to my article, I shall comment on Dr Gilbert's observations only.

Dr Gilbert writes that foreign aid should be appropriately seen as an instrument of national policy, that is of political and military strategy, widely interpreted.

In principle, foreign aid could indeed serve as a system of political and military subsidies. Whether this would be worthwhile is doubtful, since the military and material resources of most recipient governments are meagre or even negligible. Their political influence reflects the self-abasement of the West, the result largely of a widespread though unfounded feeling of guilt. Moreover, such subsidies to be at all effective would need to be highly selective, that is adjusted to the political and strategic significance of the recipients;

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What *The Human World* says about **BOOKS AND BOOKMEN**

At first sight *Books and Bookmen* looks like the surprising survival of the middlebrow. Many of its articles could indeed have found a place in the vanished quasi-literary magazines that lasted into the 'fifties, and *Books and Bookmen* does incorporate *John o'London's* and print a gossip column very reminiscent of its world. But first sights are deceptive; actually *Books and Bookmen* is a gallimaufry, a large monthly handful of pleasant and other delights of an absolutely undiscriminating catholicity. Regular monthly reviewers include the best-selling novelist of the 'twenties, Cecil Roberts, usually reminiscing about the minor literary figures he knew, Cecil King reminiscing about the less charming people *he* ran across, and Sir Oswald Mosley carefully refraining from saying too much about *his* friends. (Where else would the Mosleys and Tariq Ali appear together?) David Holbrook rubs shoulders with John Calder, and Sir Iain Moncreiffe (whose piece, to be honest, we read every month) reviews all books whatsoever on the original principle of proving that he is related to the more aristocratic branches of the author's family. Thus writers who think that the troubles of Europe all stem from the fall of legitimate royalty mix with ones looking forward to the imminent triumph of Maoist revolution.

But again, it wouldn't do to see *Books and Bookmen* as a monthly Battle of the Books, or a conjunction of contraries in the interest of some sort of progression, or a forum or a debate. None of the opposites addresses the others: there they just all are. The remarkable thing is the absence of any level of any definable intention whatever and we offer these paragraphs as an appendage to the reviews of *TLS* (*Human World 7*) merely to remark that *Books and Bookmen's* apparent deliberate policy of *not* editing is closer to *TLS* than may appear.

TLS of course hopes that people will look at it to find out 'what *TLS* says about so-and-so'; nobody would ever think of looking at *Books and Bookmen* in this way because nothing said in its pages could ever conceivably be attributed to an entity other than a particular writer. And *Books and Bookmen* takes this policy to the point of not interfering with articles that scream for the attention of an editor. (They were so glad to have got Mr Auberon Waugh – certainly an acquisition which we envy them – that they printed his review of *Crockford's Clerical Directory* in which all he said, at some length, about a book which nobody else reviews, was that there is no conceivable reason for reviewing it.)

Nevertheless the incoherence of *Books and Bookmen* is much like the one we found in *TLS,* and much preferable in being undisguised and jolly. The freedom is complete enough to permit some extremely good things (Konstantin Bazarov on Solzhenitsyn, and on the BBC's *War and Peace* for instance) – it really is true that there is something for all tastes, even ours. But we can't help drawing the moral that however pleasant and diverse a collection *Books and Bookmen* makes (see their list of authors in recent advertisement) there is the need for somebody in the world to try for something else, something more like the function of criticism discharged by a serious coherence.

Meanwhile *Books and Bookmen* is a good long read which we heartily recommend to loungers on August beaches, but they should be warned that it often has a few things liable to wake them up. *Reprinted in entirety from the August 1973 issue of* The Human World.

[Since the above appeared Lord Butler, Lord Chalfont, Dame Margaret Cole, Enoch Powell and Paul Foot have become regular contributors to Books and Bookmen.]

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and the disbursement of the subsidies would need to be subject to clear explicit or implicit conditions.

In fact, so-called development assistance is not calculated even remotely to serve as an instrument of political or military strategy, and it is not so regarded by the donors. In this way they are quite right. In my article I presented a variety of reasons why the present system of so-called development aid can be expected to damage the political and military interests of the donors. I also presented a host of instances when aid recipients have embarrassed and abused the donors. To the list there presented I may add that in the 1960s, when Dr Nkrumah's Ghana received much Western largesse, there was established there the Nkrumah Institute of Marxist-Leninist Studies, staffed largely by teachers from the Soviet Bloc.

P. T. BAUER

London School of Economics

Left-wing Poets of The '30s

IN *R*'S APOLOGIA for the left-wing poets of the 1930s ["Column", January] he describes them in terms hardly less derogatory than those used by George Watson in the December issue of ENCOUNTER, declaring that they consciously adhered to doctrines which justified brutal, ruthless measures.

R first of all admits that Brecht "spoke a language which came from the other side of the abyss", and that his *Massnahme* "can indeed be read as a glorification of punitive measures."

As for the English left-wing poets, he describes them as men "valuing ideas, not so much for their truth, as for the use they can make of them." They were, he says, people "we ought not to take seriously." They "were strangely uninterested and incurious about the realities of life in Russia. Russia, for most of them, was a blank space on the map, which they could fill in according to their fancy." They were "badly cast actors, stumbling through roles for which they were fundamentally ill-suited."

What a pathetic picture! They were not writers who should be taken seriously; they indulged, *R* said so himself, in "higher frivolity." So we can take our choice. Auden, Day-Lewis and Spender did know what they were writing about when they praised Communism, or they were deliberately ignorant wishful-thinkers, merely playing with words.

FRANCIS CARR

London

AUTHORS

R. Prawer Jhabvala's most recent novel is *A New Dominion* (John Murray, 1972). . . .

Charles Frankel's article, "The Plight of the Humanist Intellectual," is based on remarks made recently to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in Boston. . . .

Richard Hough is a biographer and naval historian; he has been a publisher since 1947, but now restricts himself to consultancy work, for Heinemann. His numerous books include *First Sea Lord: A Life of Lord Fisher* (Allen & Unwin, 1966) and *Captain Bligh and Mr Christian* (Hutchinson, 1972). . . .

François Bondy is an editor of *Die Weltwoche*, Zurich. His most recent articles in ENCOUNTER are "Italy's 'Cultural Crisis'" (January 1974), "Letter from France" (May 1973), and "D'Annunzio and Mussolini" (April 1972). . . .

John P. Mackintosh was Professor of Politics at the University of Strathclyde from 1965–66, when he was elected Labour MP for Berwick and East Lothian; he lost his seat by 60 votes in the 1974 general election. His books include *The British Cabinet* (1962), *The Devolution of Power* (1968), and *British Government and Politics* (Hutchinson, 1970). . . .

Hans J. Morgenthau is Professor of Political Science and Modern History at the University of Chicago, and Leonard Davis Distinguished Professor at The City College of New York. He is the author of many books on international politics and foreign relations, including *The Purpose of American Politics* (1960), *Politics in the 20th Century* (1962), and *Truth and Power* (1970). . . .

Peter Porter's article is a version of his Byron Memorial Lecture, delivered earlier this year at the University of Nottingham. His most recent books of poems are *Preaching to the Converted* and *After Martial* (both Oxford University Press, 1972); *The English Poets: from Chaucer to Edward Thomas*, an anthology he has edited with Anthony Thwaite, has just been published by Secker & Warburg. . . .

Jon Stallworthy has published two books on Yeats: *Between the Lines: W. B. Yeats's Poetry in the Making* and *Vision and Revision in Yeats's Last Poems* (Oxford University Press, 1963 and 1969). His most recent books of poems are *The Apple Barrel* (Oxford University Press) and *Hand in Hand* (Chatto & Windus), both just published. He is completing a biography of Wilfred Owen. . . .

Douglas Dunn, who reviews poetry regularly for ENCOUNTER, has just been appointed Fellow in Creative Writing at the University of Hull. His third book of poems, *Love or Nothing*, will be published by Faber in the autumn. . . .

Sir Hugh Cudlipp was Editorial Director of the *Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Pictorial* from 1952–1963. He has recently retired from his post as Chairman of the International Publishing Corporation.

Paul Johnson was Editor of the *New Statesman* from 1965, when he joined its board of directors, until 1970. His books include *Statesmen and Nations* (1971) and *The Offshore Islanders* (Weidenfeld, 1972). . . .

Maurice Edelman has been a Labour MP, for a Coventry constituency, since 1945. He is the author of studies in political history and many novels, including *Disraeli in Love* (Collins, 1972), which has just been published in paperback by Fontana. . . .

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Washington

FISHY STORY: A dogfish by any other name would taste much better, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has decided.

The agency is seeking sweeter-sounding names for the "dogfish," "ratfish," "cancer crab," "barred grunt" and "saucer-eye porgy"—among others—in a bid to boost their sales to the housewife.

Long ago, the horse mackerel was renamed the tuna.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

Peking

LITERARY POLITICS: *The Chinese Communist Party has printed a critique of the famous 18th-century novel "Dream of the Red Chamber", comparing the ideas in it with those of China's present foreign policy.*

The aristocrats whose declining fortunes are traced in the novel are compared to the Soviet Union and the United States, in the interests of proving that an outward show of strength or prosperity cannot hide the rot within.

The message could not be lost when today's "People's Daily" printed both a leading article on questions of the relations between the Third World and the superpowers, and a political analysis of the "Dream of the Red Chamber", in the same issue.

The novel, one of the three or four most highly regarded in the entire tradition of Chinese fiction, has usually been seen as a psychological and sometimes erotic account of adolescence, as well as a novel of manners describing the high society of the last great period of imperial China.

It is almost a stroke of genius for China's modern critics to be able to turn this work into a political critique of modern times.

THE TIMES

Luxembourg

JOCUS-POCUS: The prospect of Latin becoming the official language of the European Community seemed to have vanished today when it was revealed the suggestion made yesterday was only a joke. Two Dutch socialist members of the European Parliament, had asked if Latin could be the exclusive language of debate in the Community.

An official of the European Parliament Secretariat said here today the suggestion was certainly a joke.

Drafting of the question to the EEC Commission was delayed while officials tried to decide whether it was serious or not.

THE TIMES

Washington, D.C.

WATERGATE WORDS: "*How do you know that, Mr Chairman?*"

Ervin: *Because I can understand the English language.*

Even with the admission of tapes [Stefan Kaufer writes] no one will ever master the entire vocabulary or thought processes of the Nixon Administration. But tantalising glimpses are possible through the aperture of the Ervin hearings. By now, of course, the Nixonian cadre has turned a few phrases to bromides, notably the sci-fi sounds: "At that point in time," and, "In that time frame." Still, these clichés are excellent indicators of the Administration's unwritten laws of language. (1) never use a word when a sentence will do; (2) obscure, don't clarify.

Most of the Watergate witnesses prefer not to answer with a simple yes or no. The vagueness shown last week by H. R. Haldeman has been the motto of the month: "I am not sure whether I was or not. I may very well have been."

Haldeman introduced some collector's items: "Zero-defect system," for perfection; "containment" for the withholding of information. Throughout the hearings, where precision would help, a file of worn metaphors and similes appears. Uusally the phrases smack of the military or sports—two arenas notable for their threadbare lexicons. Porter thought of himself as "a team player", Dean as a soldier who had "earned my stripes." Ehrlichman considered himself proficient at "downfield blocking." J. Edgar Hoover was "a loyal trooper." Mitchell football-coached, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"; and everybody worried about the chief "lowering the boom."

Responsibility was obviously diffused; in the New Nixon years, power no longer seems to emanate from persons but from real estate. The President rarely appears in testimony. The word comes from "the Oval Office." When Caulfield carried the fragile promise of Executive clemency, said McCord, he spoke of "the very highest levels of the White House"—perhaps the first time that favors were to be dispensed by architecture.

In his classic essay, "Politics and the English Language", George Orwell spoke for all time: "If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought. . . . One ought to recognise that the present political chaos is connected with the decay of language, and that one can probably bring about some improvement by starting at the verbal end."

TIME

Skelmersdale

BAFFLED: Baroness Lee, widow of Aneurin Bevan and former "Minister for the Arts," has just opened a new "Nye Bevan Swimming Pool Complex" at Skelmersdale in Lancashire. She unveiled a memorial plaque bearing one of her late husband's sayings:

"The language of priorities is the religion of socialism."

I have examined this sentence [Peter Simple writes] from all angles, read it backwards and upside down, stood on a chair to scan it through a telescope and bombarded it with neutrons in my laboratory cloud chamber. Yet I still haven't the faintest idea what it means.

I suppose I must be very stupid. Can anybody help?

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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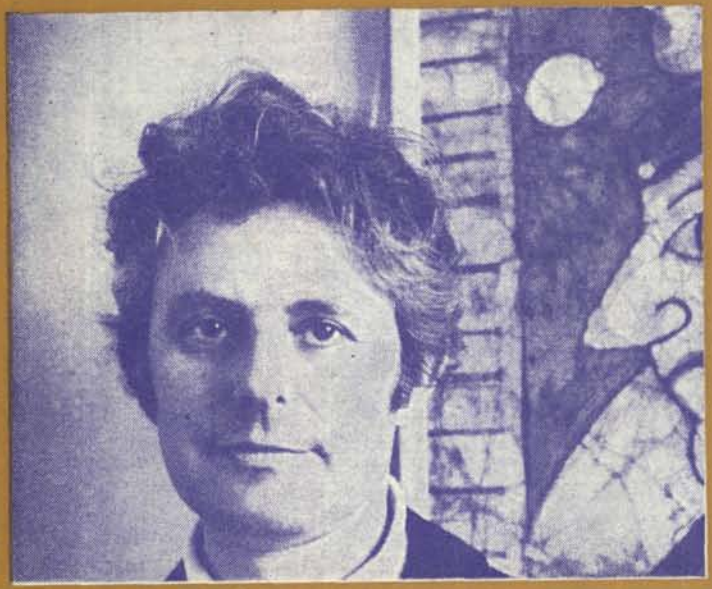
HUTCHINSON

Publishing Group

'I don't care if he's Homer. He's got to earn a living.'



Dannie Abse

A POET IN THE FAMILY

The autobiography of this popular and distinguished poet whose earlier autobiographical novel, *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve*, is an acknowledged classic. Childhood in Wales, student days in London, obedience to Abse pere's stern imperative as both practising poet and doctor, this is a witty, lyrical and often profound book – the life of 'a fortunate man'. £3.50

Patrick O'Connor

IN A MARMALADE SALOON

Pre-war Glasgow – The snooker hall, the cinema and jazz are Patrick's escapes. His teenage sister dreams of Hollywood fashions and a permanent wave. But the elder brother (his John Wayne figure) brings disgrace to the family which unleashes a blood vendetta between catholics and protestants. This richly evocative autobiographical novel is the successor to *Down The Bath Rocks*. £2.75

Rosalind Belben

THE LIMIT

Rosalind Belben's two previous novels *Reuben little hero* and *Bogies* were received with the highest critical praise. Her new novel, distinguished by its intensity of vision and economy of language, is a *tour de force* with a death becoming the focus for renewed love and searching memory. £2.45

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